Jerry Brown: 1980 or 1984? ☐ Fourth Annual Future Events Contest
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8-5

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THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

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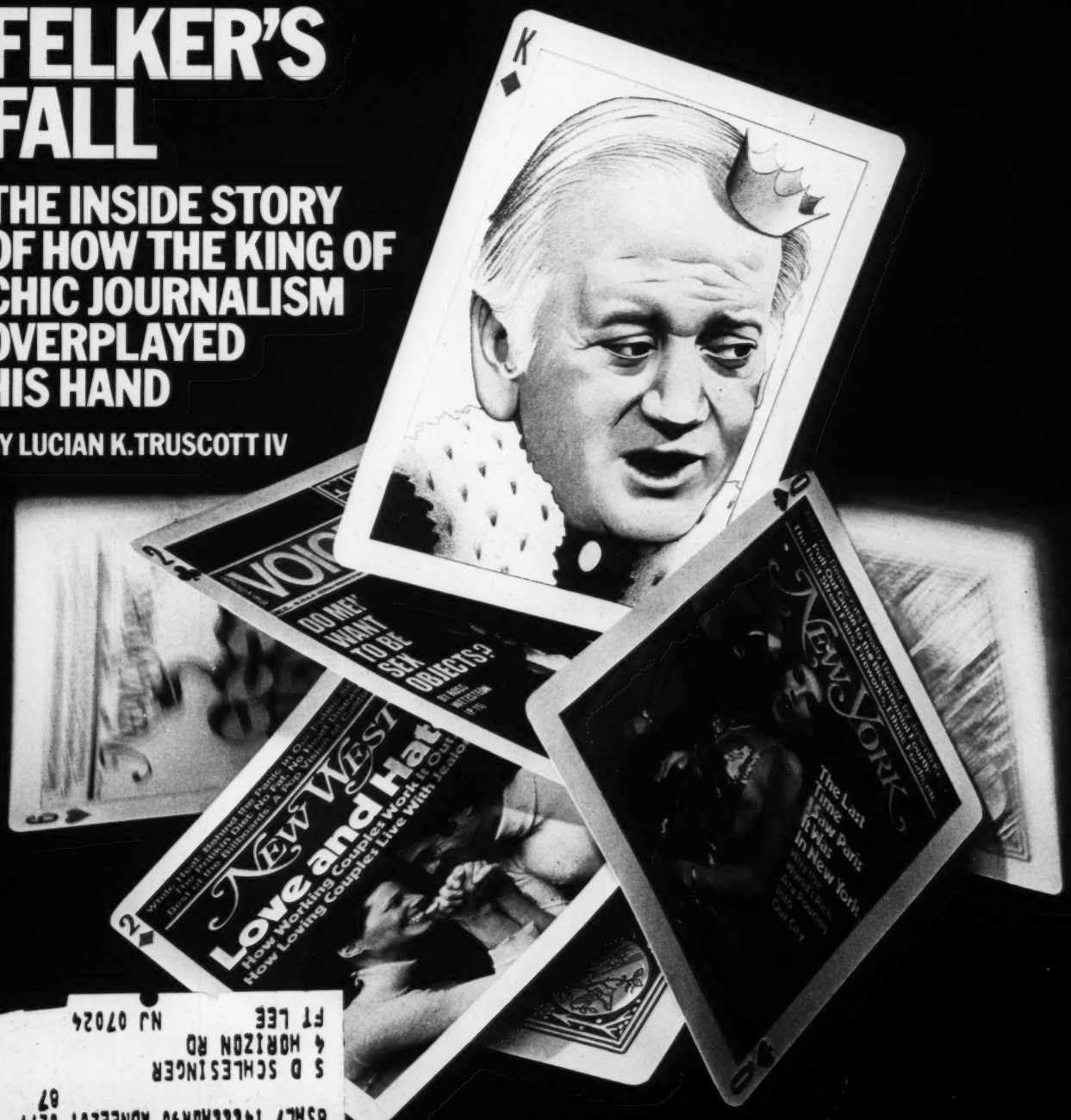
BY LUCIAN K. TRUSCOTT IV



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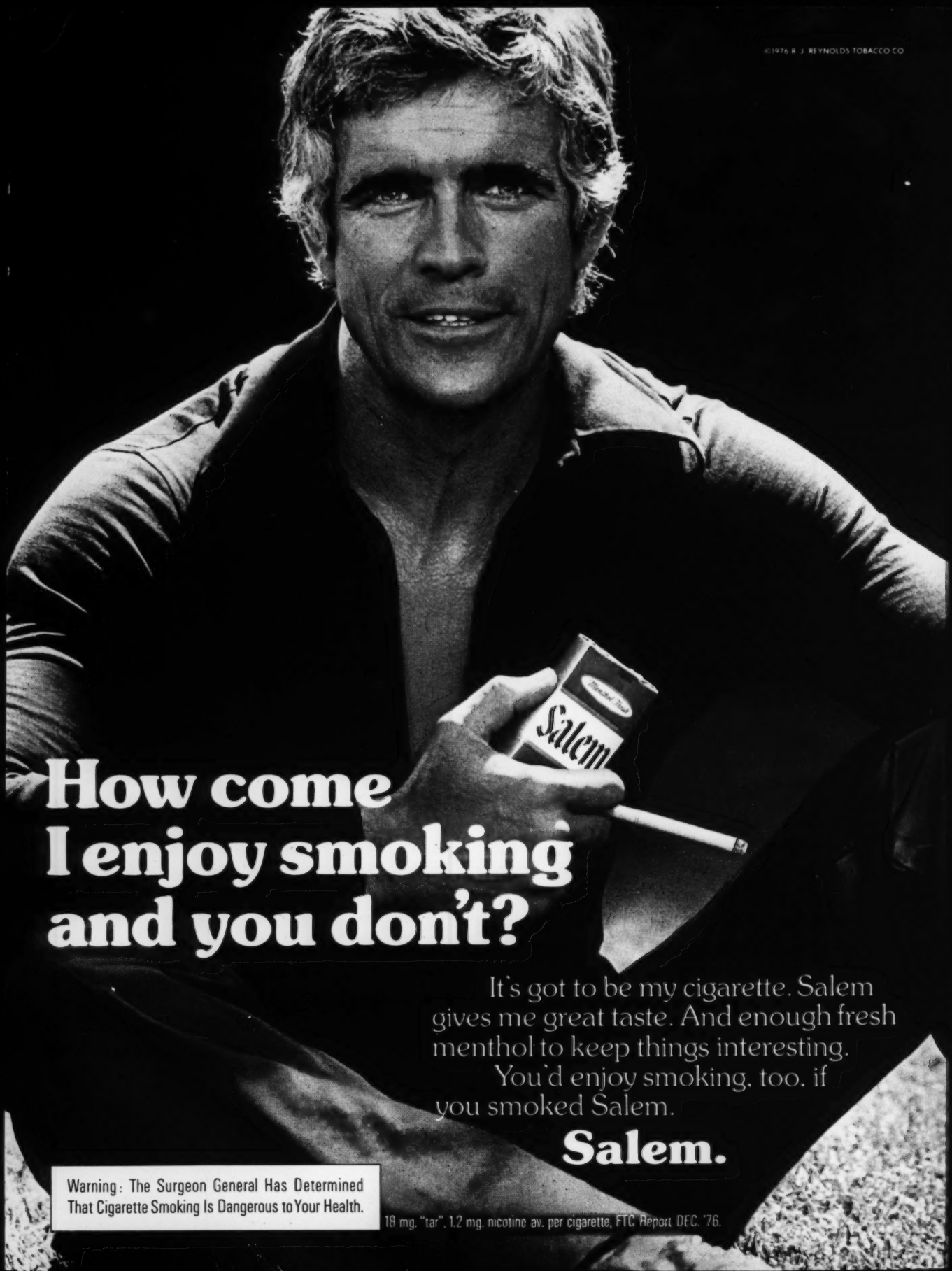
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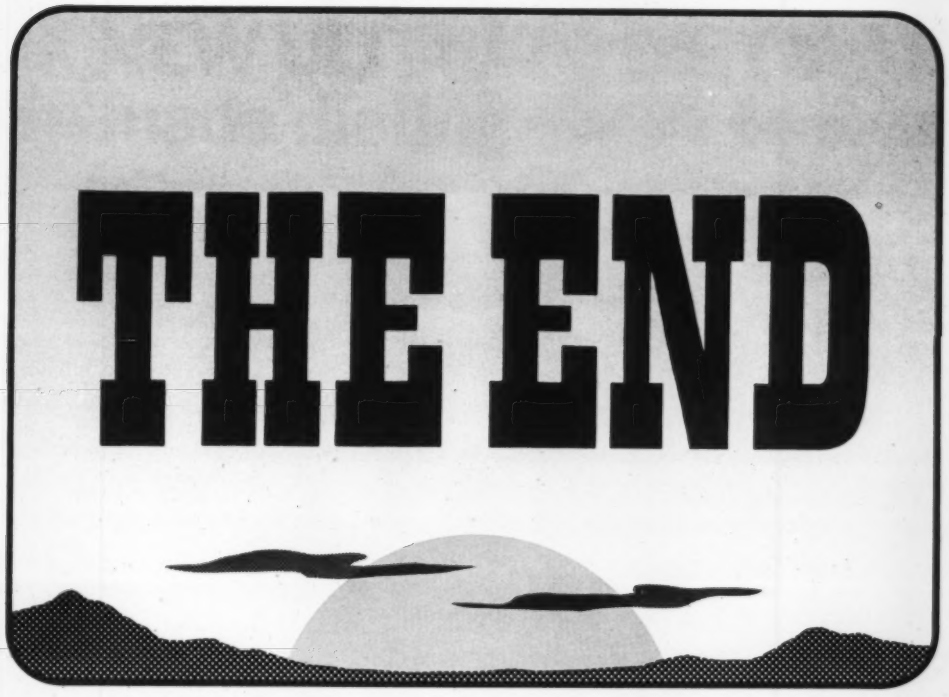

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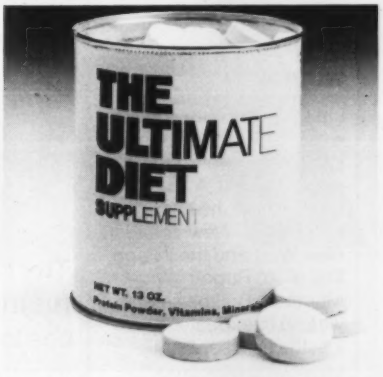

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MARCH 4, 1977
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 5

NewTimes

Requiem for a winner

Last summer Clay Felker was the Concorde of journalism: everybody wanted a seat. A few months later, he had lost his empire—*New York*, *New West* and the *Village Voice*—to Rupert Murdoch. But the sellout was no unexpected coup, just the final scene in a continuing boardroom soap opera. "Clay Felker," said one member, "was the only executive in Manhattan with a self-destruct button on his desk."

By Lucian K. Truscott IV

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COVER
ILLUSTRATION BY BILL NELSON
PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE COOPER

The Mt. Kisco sting

With old gunrunner movies and the *Kojak* series as primers, the police force and citizens of a New York City suburb joined forces with an amazing undercover-cop buff to spring the trap on a gang of international gun merchants.

By Robert Ward

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The fourth annual future events contest

It's that time of year again. So look to your tea leaves and let us know what you think will be happening in the next ten months.

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X-rays: a troubled picture

Those innocent X-rays casually snapped by the family doctor or dentist are probably doing you serious harm.

By Christopher Norwood

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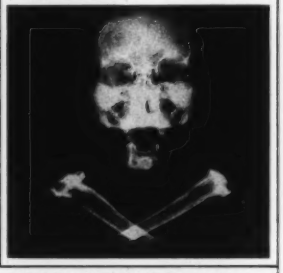

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California's Jerry Brown is trying to gain the world and keep his soul, too.
By Robert Shrum

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Resnais and Fellini create fictions out of their lives and dreams — but to what different ends.
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By Daniel J. Blackburn

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Behind The Scenes

Robert Ward (author of "The Mt. Kisco Sting") is a 33-year-old contributing writer to *New Times*. In the past, Ward has focused for us on hustlers and con men, culminating in his acid portrait last year of *Hustler* magazine's Larry Flynt. This time, in a story that he researched for two months, he turns his attention to the police of Mt. Kisco, New York.

"It's the other side of the coin," says Ward, "but the fascination for me remains the same. All the people I write about share an absence of any real sense of self in traditional terms; for me, the most interesting people in our society today are the ones who invent themselves, then take other, less inventive people along with them. This is certainly true of all the people I've been writing about at *New Times*, from Eddie Livingston, the used car dealer, to Barney Matthews, the collection agent, to Tony Stagg, the hero of Mt. Kisco. Their primary gratification comes not from money or other traditional rewards but from a tremendous inner necessity to keep themselves at peak performance. All the guys I've written about are outlaws from the mainstream who exist solely for their roles."

Ward develops this theme in his new novel, *Cattle Annie and Little Britches*, which will be published next year by William Morrow. And he is not yet done with his Mt. Kisco saga, for he has just signed a contract with King-Hitzig Productions and Paramount to write the screenplay. "Capturing a chameleon like Stagg on the screen will be terrific fun," he says. "I only hope I can find a role in the script for the man himself; after all, he conducts an actor's studio in his own head every day of his life."

In Bob Ward's 1976 profile of Larry Flynt, Ward described Flynt's creation as "essentially moronic." "The total mindlessness of the magazine is astounding," he wrote. "The photo layouts are simply gross caricatures that dehumanize everyone involved."

Certainly nothing has appeared in *Hustler* since then that would require a reassessment of Flynt or his magazine; more than any U.S. publication of its size (current circulation: 2.5 million), it degrades everything it touches—and there's nothing it won't touch.

For all of that, we take strong exception to the recent conviction and jailing in Cincinnati of Larry Flynt on obscenity charges; it was a foreboding development, not only for those of us in the publishing business, but for everyone who values our First Amendment guarantees of free speech and a free press.

Flynt's conviction (and 7- to 25-year prison sentence) grew out of a 1973 Supreme Court ruling that set "community standards" as the yardstick by which obscenity is to be measured. The predictable problem with such a yardstick is that the standards of a single community—even assuming they can accurately be determined—can end up being imposed on the entire country. As in the case of *Hustler*, one local judge can in effect decide what is permissible for the rest of us to read. That's usually called censorship.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARILYN PHILLIPS

Robert Ward: Out of the mainstream

It is a bad precedent, one that ultimately could preclude much more than the sexist and moronic crudity of a *Hustler*. We can only hope the Flynt conviction will be overturned; for without the freedom to offend and even to outrage, free speech and a free press are only shadow rights.

George A. Hirsch

Letters

The snuff connection

To the casual observer Robert Sam Anson's piece on Gary Gilmore ("Death in Zion," February 4) and Judith Coburn's "S&M" article may seem to be disparate and unrelated. I, however, see rather startling and frightening connections.

In Gary Gilmore we had a willing victim pleading, via the media, for the ultimate act of brutality—to be killed. And then we had all too many people in this country who were eager to comply. And here, too, we had the professional voyeurs—the media. They were lurking about, writing about every stay of execution and every suicide attempt, straining with microphones to capture the sounds of the shots.

Look at the chair Gilmore was strapped into. Look at the SM regalia on page 49. And then tell me there is no connection. Snuff theater has arrived.

David. C. Heverly
Lock Haven, Pennsylvania

Anson's sensitive, shattering account of the Gilmore debacle is really an indictment of us, the people. Seems we are not far removed from the days of the Roman gladiators; nor, for that matter, from the sadistic segment of society for whom pulling off flies' wings was great sport.

Dorothy de Witt Neal
Sarasota, Florida

Robert Sam Anson is a *New Times* bonus. It's unfortunate, however, that one had to endure yet another piece on the Gilmore saga for the simple pleasure of Anson's style. Like Anson, "I was sick of him already."

Mary K. Thompson
Lee, Massachusetts

As soon as I extricate myself from these nail-studded leather thongs, I'll try to formulate an opinion of your article on sadomasochism (February 4). I am a member of the generation that came of age during the hippie-philosophizing of the sixties; everything symbolized something else and something else was usually political. Or sexual. Therefore, if violence and sex are so inseparably bound, may I assume that my years of fights with my brother were inspired by thoughts of incest rather than, as I had previously suspected, fratricide?

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Party Lines

The state of Jerry Brown/ By Robert Shrum

When the doorbell rang at 3:30 a.m., the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, like any sensible man of 70, was home in bed. Donald Wright was due to retire from the court and, as governor, Jerry Brown would appoint his successor. Brown had heard that Wright was angry at not being consulted about the appointment. Now the groggy, bathrobed chief justice opened his front door and there in the middle of the night stood the governor in suit and tie, as though it were the middle of the day. So Wright wanted to be consulted; well, Brown was there to consult. The next morning, Wright told one of his law clerks: "Arrogance is spelled J-E-R-R-Y."

But Jerry was spelling, too, on that predawn visit, spelling out more than the obvious meaning that met Wright's tired eyes. By mockingly observing it, he was rebuking the assumption that powers of the past have a claim on the future. And in this case, the substance came simultaneously with the symbolism. The person he had in mind as the next chief justice, Brown informed Wright, confirming the press speculation, was Rose Bird, his Secretary of Agriculture and Services. She is hardly the legal establishment's ideal man for the post. She is not a long-time judge, but a one-time public defender. She is not a leader of the bar association, nor a member of a corporate law firm, but Cesar Chavez' friend, who two years ago drafted California's pro-farm-labor act. Now, at the age of 40, old enough to be a junior partner in a big firm, she will be the first woman to serve as chief justice of an important court.

The Wright visit and the Bird choice are typical of the Jerry Brown who cites *Deschooling Society* as a text for university administrators and who suggests that medical school officials requesting budget increases should read and reflect on *Medical Nemesis*, a scathing dissection of their curative practices as primary causes of illness and death. "How can I move the cumbersome hierarchy of the university or of the medical association or the Supreme Court without stirring things up?" Brown asked during an interview in his office. "Sometimes you have to be sweetness and light and other times you have to kick them."

From the first, Californians seemed to be enchanted with a governor kicking conventions, renting a modest apartment for $270 a month instead of living in the imperial governor's mansion for free, sleeping on a mattress on a bare floor, riding in a Plymouth rather than a Cadillac. The symbols keep coming: last month, Brown staying overnight in a San Francisco housing project; this month, Brown in a police car cruising a night beat in Orange County. But recently the enchantment appears to be ragging at the edges. Despite Brown's flat-out endorsement and all-out effort, last fall Californians overwhelmingly spurned Proposition 14, the farm worker's ballot initiative. His popularity declined 7 points between August and November of 1976. (Brown's slip in the statewide polls from 84 percent approval in 1975 to 78 percent last November does leave him equal to Ronald Reagan's best rating ever as governor.) "People are finally catching on," explains a disgruntled liberal activist in Los Angeles. Comparing Brown to Gertrude Stein's description of Oakland, "There is no there there," he judges harshly: "Jerry has a mystique, but he hasn't done *anything*." If Brown continues to slip in popularity, that verdict will probably become the political columnists' handy rationalization of the reason. It would be convenient, and, even better, psychically satisfying, like exposing the little man behind the Wizard of Oz machine.

Bird: Brown's Chief Justice pick

But in fact, a large part of Brown's current problem seems to be overperformance. All Californians approved of the rhetoric of limits on what government could do—as long as it didn't mean for them. The rule is that each group expects to be the exception. After two years, Brown has done more than enough to make important enemies in virtually every interest group.

Business interests assail him for fostering a bad business climate. Recently they acquired a symbol of their own when Dow Chemical abandoned plans for a $500 million petrochemical complex in the Bay Area, blaming state requirements for 65 separate permits. In fact, all but 12 of the permits were for private easements. Tom Quinn, Brown's campaign manager in 1974, now chairman of the state Air Resources Board, says: "Jerry offered to consolidate the state hearing process, but Dow didn't want that. Their strategy was to nickel and dime the environmental process to death. Dow proposed only 1 of the 13 facilities in the complex for initial approval; they know that facilities under a certain size don't generate enough pollution to be a problem under the law. They refused to supply data for the whole development."

The Dow episode was big news in California. It was the same kind of bad news Brown heard in a private meeting with business investors at Salomon Brothers when he was back East for Jimmy Carter's inauguration. California, they told him, was one of the worst places to invest. They complained particularly about the environmental permit policy. Recently Conrad Jamieson of the Security Pacific National Bank showed Tom Quinn a map with California colored black for being antibusiness. "So were the other industrial states," Quinn remembers. "In the states without industry, where there are no problems, you can do anything you want." Quinn calls it "business blackmail."

Brown agrees: "The whole strategy of the, quote, bad business climate propaganda is to soften up the legislature and the public for tax breaks and weakening environmental restrictions." Business was shocked to find out that "we actually intended to enforce the restrictions," Quinn says. "Reagan soft-pedaled them." Early in Brown's term, the Air Resources Board interdicted all American Motors sales in the state for about two weeks and fined the company $1.1 million for falsifying emissions tests. The board gave all

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In the midst of the 1975 recession, Brown insisted that state policies were a negligible factor in the growth or decline of California's economy. Federal decisions made the difference. And last year, despite the "antibusiness climate," California recovered with the rest of the nation, but even faster: personal income rose 10 percent, housing starts were the highest in the country. "It's not that we let up on the environment or anything else," Quinn concludes. "It's that a national recovery started and we have certain natural advantages."

Yet, ironically, for a man who takes the benefit of symbols, Brown increasingly bears the burden of an antijobs image as the economic reality improves. "The unions," explains a state senator, " are so mad at Jerry that they're becoming satellites of business opinion." Their real complaint, he suggests, is that Brown "has stopped feeding some of their sacred cows." Dave Marr, a powerful Operating Engineers Union official, has assailed the governor for "all but dismantling the state highway program." Brown slowed the construction of freeways because, as an aide puts it, "in an era of limits, you don't keep paving the state." He further offended the business community and union chieftains by personally lobbying in the State Senate for legislation to control coastal development and nuclear power plants. This, too, meant less construction.

So it goes with Brown and the interest groups. The teachers are mad because he shifted general-purpose school aid to specific programs like bilingual education; traditionally, state aid was the leverage for teachers to lobby higher salaries out of local school boards. Higher-paid state employees are mad because last year Brown provided a flat $70-a-month salary increase to all civil servants, which benefited the lower levels the most. University professors are mad because this year he told them to enjoy the "psychic income" of teaching while making do with a miniscule raise. Even the Veterans of Foreign Wars are mad: Brown rejected their request to proclaim "National Loyalty Day" on May Day, as the 49 other governors were doing, because a proclamation costs $100 worth of special paper.

A Brown fund raiser moans: "People who get the President on the phone can't get to Jerry at all. He treats everybody the same, even the big contributors." Don Burns, a former cabinet member and Yale classmate of Brown, says: "Especially the big contributors. In the transition after he was elected, they kept pushing buttons, but the buttons weren't any buttons connected to anything. They handed him lists of appointments and he threw them away. They went to his father and Pat wrote 15 letters a day and Jerry didn't answer them."

"Try and list the vested interest groups that are for him," says a Democrat who holds a statewide office. "There aren't any, unless you count the farm workers as one. He's alienated them all." Jerry Brown is trying to be a post-interest group politician.

Traditionally, coalitions of interest groups have dominated American politics; even Carter was driven back to that tradition for the critical margin of votes to finally make his presidency. But Brown continues to believe, he says, that while "pressure groups represent special and particular interests, people in their general role of citizens relate to government on a much more general basis."

At risk is his reelection next year. Democratic National Committeeman Steve Reinhardt, a close Brown ally, assesses the governor's support as "broad, but thin. It stems from no traditional appeal. It's the kind that can turn very quickly." Brown feared he might do some of the turning himself when in the State of the State message—ten minutes this year instead of seven—he announced that as "a matter of conscience" he would veto any death penalty bill. It was at the very end of the speech. ("Who besides Brown would finish on such a downer?" wonders an assembly aide.) By a 2 to 1 margin, California voters approved capital punishment in 1972, and the support is higher now. The legislature might have "admired him for it," as one of the members recalls. "A lot of us thought that guy's got guts." But this member and a majority of his colleagues almost certainly will pass a death penalty bill. If a Brown veto is sustained it is equally certain there will be an initiative on the ballot in 1978. And Brown's matter of conscience will be a major campaign issue. One Republican hopeful, San Diego Mayor Pete Wilson, the moderate in the field, made that perfectly clear. "The governor," he said, "is entitled to his opinion, but it will be cold comfort to the widow of a prison guard or the victim of an armed robbery." Before offering his opinion, Brown, who stood outside San Quentin in protest the night of the last execution there a decade ago, asked a friend what he thought. "The real question is whether you have an obligation to commit political suicide for a principle," he was told. "This could be it."

"Brown has stolen frugality from the Republicans and been a liberal at the same time," marvels one pol

Brown is not anxious to die politically for opposing the death penalty. And he has a strategy to sustain his general appeal. The key is no tax increases. It is a campaign promise he has kept with a vengeance. He has vetoed several tax increases and dozens of appropriations bills of all kinds. He recently warned the prospective sponsor of a small TV-user tax to support public broadcasting that he meant "*no* new taxes, period." Assemblyman Terry Goggin says, "Brown has given credibility to liberalism in this state," and not so incidentally to himself: "He is the first governor anyone in California can remember not raising taxes. He has stolen frugality from the Republicans and been a liberal at the same time."

This feat mandates a mutation of liberalism. Holding taxes down short-circuits the reflex liberal assumption of a bigger pie with bigger slices for every group. Liberals in the past have avoided choosing among and against groups, hoping, as John Kennedy said, "to lift all boats." Opposing all tax increases, Brown had to torpedo a lot of the boats. He had to choose. He *had* to be a post-interest group politician. And the choice appears to have served him well. "People really care about their pocketbooks," a Republican political consultant says. "And however we try to explain it away, they believe Brown won't raise taxes. They can't be sure about any Republican. Even Reagan raised taxes a lot: the sales tax went from 4 to 6 percent."

Brown himself is not quite that confident about next year. He observes that "the custodians of what is" can always find a reason why his kind of politics is "heresy, and we know what happens to heretics." So, nearing the campaign that will determine whether reelection happens to him, this post-interest group politician has nervously hedged his heretical notions with a little orthodox expediency. Brown recently approved the revival of three freeway projects. Anxious about all the business criticism, he is on the verge of supporting a massive liquid natural gas project to produce fuel at more than twice the OPEC price for the equivalent amount of energy in the form of oil. His proposal to meet the State Supreme Court's order to equalize property tax resources for schools in rich and poor districts won't: the richest district still will have four

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But on the central point of taxes, Brown will not yield. For that point reaches beyond 1978 and the governorship to 1980 and the possibilities of the presidency. After Carter's victory, Brown told a tête à tête of a few legislators that California would have no new taxes before he was in the White House. "When could they expect a tax increase?" one of them jibed. "Not before 1980," Brown replied matter-of-factly.

His associates obviously think about 1980. One says, "The money would be easy to raise." Another points out that "he beat Carter in five out of six primaries last year." Brown could run in Iowa and New Hampshire in 1980, a third adviser game plans, and "if he loses, what does he really lose? He can come home and prepare for '84." His executive secretary Gray Davis "wouldn't say that Brown wouldn't do it. If you go back to 1964 and try to predict who the nominee will be, you will be in error more times than not." Less than a month after the inauguration of a new Democratic president (where, a Brown man gloats, "Jerry was mobbed"), the Democratic governor of California refused to offer the standard disclaimer. "I don't know what will happen down the road," Brown says. "This is a fast-developing society. A four-year term—what happens, for good or for bad—who knows? It's not necessary to decide; if it isn't necessary, then why decide it?"

The Brown people joke about Carter's symbolism, "stealing Jerry's inner spring mattress," one of them calls it, then draw unfavorable contrasts. "The difference," another suggests, "is that Carter said he would appoint outsiders, but Jerry does it." Steve Reinhardt argues that Carter's merit system will turn judicial appointments over to the American Bar Association while "Brown has broken the establishment's hold on the courts in California. O'Melveny and Myers [the leading corporate law firm in Los Angeles] is not picking the judges anymore."

Then there are the 38 state regulatory boards, eight that have a majority of public members and seven more that soon will. With pointed subtlety Brown contrasts Carter's selections and his own, which "haven't been drawn from the lists gathered by the groups that are placed in Sacramento." Auto workers, housewives, ordinary citizens serve on the boards regulating doctors, dentists, the professional elites. Brown can be self-deprecating about it. Late to an interview, he apologized that he was talking with "a rancher from Bridgeville, who's going to go on the Board of Forestry. I was trying to ascertain his views on redwoods, private property,"—then Brown smiled—"and the balance between this generation and succeeding generations." But he is serious: "Normally, licensing boards were places where you put people because they worked in your campaign. They worked that interest group for campaign contributions. You had the Democratic dentists and the Republican dentists, but they were dentists first."

In the end, it is easier to comprehend Brown's political possibilities than his essential character. He is all on the surface and all hidden at the same time. Beneath the same surface, some see a charlatan, others a guru. Gray Davis, executive secretary, sees "a party theoretician developing a new conceptual synthesis." More modestly, it might be said that Jerry Brown seems sincere about his impulses. He describes his goals in vague terms, the means are being worked out, and for him California is the laboratory. The day I interviewed him he returned a set of grant proposals for rehabilitation centers for public inebriates to the localities for redrafting. He wanted them to include a personal commitment from public officials, business and union leaders, to work for "x number of hours" as volunteers in the centers. Then the state would provide the money. "So we'll see whether we get any requests back," he laughed. The idea had just come to him that morning; this afternoon, he was meeting with welfare directors to see if they had any other suggestions for such volunteerism, a concept he emphasized in his State of the State address.

It is a forced volunteerism. But the internal contradiction either does not occur to Brown or bothers him very little. He is the Socratic governor asking questions. He thinks "all these institutions need to be challenged." He denounces the "indifference barrier" of the "self-annointed experts" who say to him in effect "everything's fine; leave us alone; why are you doing this to us?" He talks of "a medical-industrial complex and an educational-industrial complex [that] are as big as the Pentagon." He phones religious leaders to tell them to do more social work, "the rescue business" as he describes it, or "someday someone is going to come along and take away your tax exemption." He is frustrated that "educational vouchers are an unthinkable thought, the equivalent in the education complex to H-bombs." And there is very little time: "We're not going to be here that long."

Yet he takes his own sweet time—nine months, for example, to appoint the public members to the medical board, which in the meantime lacked a quorum and now has a three-year backlog of cases. He focuses on one or two problems at a time, Gray Davis says, learns them thoroughly and handles them well. But a legislative assistant in Sacramento complains: "Everything else gets left to the very bureaucracy Brown distrusts." Last year, he vetoed an increased appropriation for mental health; now, after homicides in the mental hospitals, he has "focused" on this area and

WIDE WORLD

Monk's retreat: Brown with tenants of a housing project where he spent the night to find out what conditions were like

raised the resources for it. "People shouldn't have to die to get his attention," one liberal insists. "If small is so beautiful, then where are the small and beautiful programs?"

The answer may be that Brown regards the most basic problems as beyond the bounds of acceptable politics. Occasionally he sounds almost "Maoist," a senior adviser says, conjuring the meaning behind Brown's pet proposal of two years of mandatory public service for all 18-year-olds. "They would be cadres for the good of society, with everybody being treated equal," the adviser continues. "Jerry has a negative attitude toward those who accumulate wealth." Last year, Brown says, he had "an idea that I realized I couldn't sustain"—that "judges and janitors should get the same pay raise. But at least I threw it out and let people think about it." Maybe , Gray Davis suggests, "they will get the point that the greatest compensation shouldn't be for the best jobs." Brown thinks maybe as governor he should be working part-time in an alcohol center or a mental hospital but "it takes a little while to set up the mechanism." The senior adviser concludes: "He is the most radical politician I have ever met. But generally he tries to suppress it. The tension frustrates him. He could run for president in 1980 or quit politics and go to a monastery."

The Jesuits teach their novices: "Be in the world but not of it." Jerry Brown is of that order, though no longer in it. The Jesuits were founded to work outside the monasteries, to counter the Reformation in Europe. Half of Germany was retreived; all of France was saved—largely through the Jesuit experiment. Brown yearns to be the agent of a similarly broad secular salvation to "readjust" power, to respond to what he perceives as the "discontent in society at all levels." He does have a full quotient of personal ambition. Don Burns, an ex-Jesuit, watches "it coming right out of him. Jerry believes he could have been president last year if he ran sooner. He's kicking himself around the block." But in addition to that ambition, there is in Brown the hope or hubris that he can work out answers: not merely to questions of public policy, but to the greater question that Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, incessantly posed to Francis Xavier, who was to become the first Jesuit saint: What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and to suffer the loss of his own soul? Jerry Brown is trying to gain the world and keep his soul. At best, he could have only half of that in a monastery. So look for him on the road to the White House, trying to have it both ways. ●

The Insider

Charting the moods of a gunman/Come on down to Havana?

Politics

Kissinger's solution

Within the next few months, Henry Kissinger will join the faculty of Columbia University, according to a high Columbia official. The university will provide Kissinger a New York City base for other activities he has in mind.

The Korean quagmire

Democratic congressmen are beginning to worry that the Korean bribery scandal is spreading out of control. One well-placed House source says it seems likely that 20 congressmen could be indicted and 70 others tainted by the investigation into favors extended by the South Korean government to American legislators.

It seems that most of the congressmen involved are Democrats. If the Korean affair turns into a congressional Watergate, some Democrats fear, the Republicans may be able to seize control of the House for the first time since the Eisenhower Administration.

Will John J. Flynt, who is chairman of the House Ethics Committee investigating the scandal, allow his party to be prosecuted out of power? The last word may belong to Flynt's good friend from his home state of Georgia: Attorney General Griffin Bell.

The first family counselor

With a laugh and a smile, President Carter told an audience of HUD employees on February 10, "Those of you who are living in sin, I hope you will get married. Those of you who have left your spouses, come back home." On television, the line drew merry applause, but those close to Carter know he's not fooling around about fooling around. Upset to hear that the marriage of his top aide Hamilton Jordan was disintegrating, the President spoke to Jordan and asked him to patch things up.

The Jordans are back together.

UPI

Jordan: Back in the nest

Alan Robbins' new frontier

Those who think that everything happens first in California might consider the case of State Senator Alan Robbins, who is opposing Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley for reelection in the April primary.

In his successful campaign for the legislature in 1973, Robbins circulated a striking political leaflet called "Robbins: 'Man for the challenge.'" It turned out that the most striking thing about the flyer was its resemblance to a 1960 presidential campaign pamphlet, "Kennedy: Man for the 60's."

Both pamphlets featured an inspirational quote from the candidate. Indeed, it was the same quote: "But by realizing and accepting our responsibilities, we can convert today's fear of change into hope for a new and brighter future . . ." In the Kennedy leaflet, the line appeared with a picture of the candidate holding his baby daughter. In the retread, the photo depicted Robbins with his young son.

Will coincidences never end? Over a picture of young Kennedy and his Harvard football teammates, there appears this quote in the 1960 leaflet, excerpted from "A letter to Jack, age 14, from his father": "Be a worthwhile citizen with good judgment and understanding. I would be lacking even as a friend if I did not urge you to take advantage of the qualities you have . . . do the best you can." Over a picture of Alan Robbins in his grade school classroom, there appears the same quote—from "A letter to Alan, age 13, from his father."

Robbins isn't expected to pack the same electoral wallop as his Massachusetts predecessor. Maybe he should call attention to the illustrious genealogy of his 1973 campaign statements. If the Kennedy fans aren't impressed, perhaps the environmentalist recycling buffs will be.

Taking their time

Is there any reason that the nomination of Warren Christopher as undersecretary of state, which was announced in December, was only last week sent up for congressional approval?

Christopher and pals: Why the wait?

It's not as though Christopher is a new man in town: he was deputy attorney general in the Johnson Administration. Yet the FBI took six weeks to issue a security clearance, forcing the White House to delay the confirmation process.

Christopher is only one of many nominees whose confirmations have been waylaid in the FBI's bureaucratic swamp. One White House staffer, mindful that the FBI director knows his days in office are numbered, calls it "Clarence Kelley's revenge."

Senatorial territorial imperatives

Liberals on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee are furious that the Senate Armed Services Committee is duplicating their work by holding a second set of hearings on Paul Warnke as head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

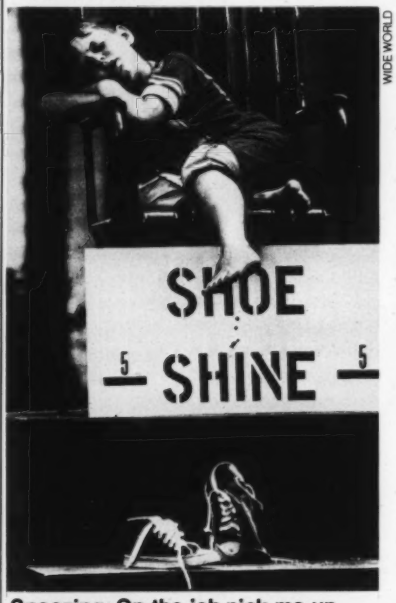
Complaining that Warnke's nomination falls solely under their jurisdiction, the riled Foreign Relations Committee members are threatening to hold hearings on appointments that would normally be reviewed by the Armed Services Committee.

"Two can play at this game," says a top staffer for Foreign Relations. "All the pressure now is from the hard-liners, and we have to generate some in the opposite direction."

Mind & Body

Keeping up

Naps might be superior to coffee breaks as afternoon pick-me-ups. Dr. Frederick Evans of the University of Pennsylvania found that after brief snoozes, students could solve complex math problems more efficiently. They were also generally less anxious and stressful. "It appears that, for a certain proportion of people, naps are of definite psychological and mental benefit," Dr. Evans told us. "These people don't physically need the sleep, but they enjoy it, and for them, a nap would definitely be better than a coffee break as a stimulant. In fact, it wouldn't be a bad idea for companies to give its employees a choice between the two. The results might surprise them."



WIDE WORLD

Snoozing: On-the-job pick-me-up

Taking Care of Business

Labor's new weapon

Last June, the Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers of America announced plans for a nationwide boycott of the products of the J. P. Stevens Company. The Stevens Company employs over 44,000 nonunion workers in some 80 plants in the South and produces textile items ranging from Fruit Of The Loom underwear to Utica bedsheets.

The boycott, which has the full backing of the AFL-CIO, is considered a crucial test of organized labor's ability to unionize southern workers. For this reason, millions of dollars are being channeled into what insiders refer to as the largest boycott ever mounted by the trade union movement.

In past boycotts, unions have called upon consumers to refuse to buy the manufacturer's products and have asked retailers to withhold purchase orders for the manufacturer's goods. Now, boycott organizer Pam Woywod says the Textile Workers are contemplating a new strategy, one that has never before been used by organized labor: withholding of capital funds.

Large institutional investors, including major banks, hold much of the stock of J.P. Stevens and other *Fortune* 500 companies. Ironically, much of the money these banks invest in companies like Stevens comes directly from private union pension funds. Through pension funds, American workers now own large chunks of most of America's major corporations, including J.P. Stevens.

Woywod predicts that the unions will withdraw their deposits from one or more key banks that are investing funds in J.P. Stevens—unless they are persuaded that such a course of action amounts to an illegal secondary boycott in the eyes of the law.

The implications of a capital boycott carried out by the labor community are enormous. Today, private pension funds in the country contain over $200 billion and are a chief source of equity capital in U. S. industry.

As Peter Drucker, the capitalist guru, points out in his controversial recent book, *The Unseen Revolution*, American workers and unions are no longer simple adversaries of the ownership class. In a concrete way, American workers have become a new ownership class. Close to 25 percent of the equity capital in U.S. industry is now provided by private and public pension funds, which, in effect, represent the personal investment portfolios of millions of workers.

With the J.P. Stevens boycott, organized labor may apply this leverage for the first time. On March 1, the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility will introduce a number of resolutions at the annual stockholder's meeting in New York City. If, as expected, their resolutions are defeated, look for an announcement by the Textile Workers on the possible withdrawal of millions of dollars of union funds deposited in major banks that invest in or do business with the J.P. Stevens Company. Although those close to the boycott have been careful not to mention specific banks, it is generally known that Manufacturer's Hanover Trust is heavily involved in financing the J.P. Stevens Company and could well become the first target of a capital boycott.

—Jeremy Rifkin and Ted Howard

Seventies

The mind patrol

When Tony Kiritsis held mortgage company executive Dick Hall hostage for three days in Indianapolis recently, the saga was widely reported: Kiritsis had wired his apartment with explosives, chained a gun to Hall's head and filled the radio and TV airwaves with strings of obscenities. But behind the klieg lights, another, private drama was unfolding: the attempt to get inside Tony Kiritsis' head.

Patrick Mulaney, a 42-year-old stress instructor from the FBI Academy in Washington, developed a file on the kidnapper, then used the information to construct scenarios that might persuade Kiritsis to abandon his plan to kill or be killed. From his command post, Mulaney monitored all actions in Kiritsis' third-floor apartment; he also listened in on phone calls, and a bugging device on the ceiling of the apartment directly below Kiritsis' enabled him to pick up conversations between captor and hostage. Supplementing these observations with interviews with family and friends, Mulaney charted Kiritsis' moods, showing when they could be expected to rise and fall.

Using his charts as a kind of timetable, Mulaney settled on a plan. His first step was to make Kiritsis feel isolated. The telephone in the

UPI

Kiritsis and hostage: What is this man thinking?

apartment, which had been ringing with calls from friends, ministers and cranks, suddenly became silent: the number had been changed. The heat and lights were cut. The idea was to build a "claustrophobic effect."

Early in the siege, Kiritsis had called local news director Fred Heckman of WIBC to outline his demands, and now Heckman was used to reinforce Mulaney's scenarios. First, the FBI man tried to make the kidnapper feel that "any movement was impossible," then, during the second overnight period, to try to ally kidnapper and hostage in Kiritsis' mind. Mulaney believed this linkage would reduce the chance of injury to Hall. By constant reference to both men in the same cold and unlit apartment, the scheme began to work. By morning, Kiritsis and Hall were talking "like long-lost brothers."

At dawn of the third day, Mulaney directed a new effort to create a sense of "elation" in his subject. Mulaney kept a constant stream of "positives" feeding into the apartment by phone until night fell, when the "negatives" were reintroduced. Without overstimulating the depressive side of Kiritsis' personality, his telephone callers began reconstructing the claustrophobic effect; they warned that some law officers were getting edgy, and said that the negotiations over immunity had broken down.

Suddenly, at 9 p.m., some 60 hours after the ordeal began, Kiritsis started making new demands, including one for $5 million. It was the one thing Mulaney hadn't counted on, but he knew what it meant. He predicted it was Kiritsis' last moment of bravado—"the climax to the act"—and said the ordeal would be over by 10:30 that night. At 10:35 p.m., Kiritsis emerged from his apartment still holding a gun to Dick Hall's head. After a final 30-minute harangue on live TV, Kiritsis walked his hostage and several law enforcement officials to the command post where he freed Hall, fired a blast out the window and gave up. Mulaney was cool about his success. It was, he said, "a textbook case." —*Tom Cochrun*

Welcome to Cuba

Prerevolutionary Cuba used to serve as the winter playground for hundreds of thousands of Americans, drawn not only by the island's sugary beaches, but also by the abundance of fleshpot vices in Havana. Now there is a growing chance that the Americans will soon be returning—but this time it will be tourism on the Cubans' terms.

"Our tourism will never be the same as it was before the Revolution," says one official of Cubatur, the state-run travel company. "Never again will it be based on gambling, drugs and prostitution."

Havana holiday in the fifties: Will U.S. tourists return to Cuba?

While the Carter Administration studies the possibility of a new Cuban policy, both Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro have been dropping public hints about the desirability of eased relations. Carter himself has spoken of "a mutual desire to alleviate tensions" between the U.S. and Cuba. In the wake of such comments, a small group of U.S. tour operators and travel agents recently visited the island to look over the facilities and to talk a little business.

The Cubans say they are ready to issue visas for members of U.S. tour groups right now. The only stumbling block, they maintain, is the American restriction on such visits.

During the 1950s, according to Cubatur statistics, about 80 percent of the island's tourism came from the U.S. The number of foreign vacationers peaked in 1957 at 272,000, but when Castro aligned himself with the Soviet bloc and the U.S. slapped its trade embargo on the island, tourism took a nose dive: all through the 1960s, Cuba hosted fewer than 2,000 vacationers a year, and there was a corresponding deterioration of facilities.

In the last few years, the Cuban government has built up the country's heavy industry and strengthened its internal economy. But the recent drop in sugar prices has badly hurt the island, forcing a tightening of rationing and encouraging Cuba to look again to tourism as a means of gaining foreign exchange revenues. Last year, when the number of foreign tourists approached 80,000, the government embarked on a five-year tourism development plan. The target is 300,000 visitors a year by 1980—not necessarily counting Americans. If this goal is achieved, Cubatur says, it would make tourism one of the island's top four industries.

The plan calls for constructing 59 new hotels and resorts (23 are already in the works or recently finished), building a new Havana airport and two more elsewhere on the island, beefing up Cubatur's fleet of 80 air-conditioned motorcoaches and adding to the currently inadequate supplies of rental cars and taxis. Existing hotels are being renovated, and structures of historical interest—including the entire colonial-era city of Trinidad on the south coast—are being restored and repainted.

Resorts and beaches remain a primary attraction, and all along the north coast, what used to be the private beach houses and villas of the wealthy have been converted into public accommodations. The former DuPont family mansion near Varadero, built in 1926 at a cost of $1.4 million, is now a public restaurant and museum.

Unlike some socialist capitals, Havana offers a varied nightlife (though the shows are now pretty tame by U.S. standards) and an abundance of cultural attractions. Every tour of the city includes a stop at the Museum of the Revolution (formerly the Presidential Palace), the showplace for memorabilia like Che Guevara's famous black beret and the tank with which Fidel reputedly sank one of the attacking boats at the Bay of Pigs.

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DATSUN SAVES

Another museum now is Ernest Hemingway's house on a hill outside Havana, preserved just as it was when he last stayed there—right down to the half-empty rum bottles in the living room. His fishing boat, *Pilar,* is on blocks in the yard.

The Cubans don't hesitate to use tourism to show off what the government has accomplished since the Revolution. Cubatur sightseeing excursions into the countryside emphasize things like prefabricated housing projects, rural medical clinics, and the live-in high schools which are being built in rural regions as part of a national program for city teenagers to learn the "virtues" of labor in the fields.

Travel executives expect that if Cuban tourism does open up to U.S. citizens soon, it will happen in stages. E. Wallace Lawrence, president of New York-based Orbitair International, says he is assembling information on professional groups interested in visiting Cuba, on the assumption that the first legal tours would be limited to such groups, much as they have been in China.

"I don't see general-interest tourism for a while," says Lawrence, who recently returned from Havana, "but we are hoping that 'professional exchange' types of programs can be agreed on soon. The Cubans are optimistic about American tourism resuming; they want the business and they're ready to deal." —*James Glab*

Behind Agee's deportation: Is Britain the next Chile?

Why is the British government trying to deport Philip Agee? Agee's book, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary,* published in 1975 in England to avoid CIA censorship, became a British best seller and caused the CIA to completely reorganize its operations in Latin America. The book listed the names of hundreds of CIA agents and front organizations and detailed their covert activities.

Forced out of France by CIA harassment, Agee has been living with his family in England since 1972. Late last year, Merlyn Rees, the British Home Secretary, served Agee with notice that he was to be deported for unspecified "security reasons." Under the 1971 British Immigration Act, Agee was allowed to appeal the decision to an advisory board, but regardless of the board's findings the Home Secretary can still proceed with the deportation. The United States is the probable country of destination, and Agee could face charges if he is sent home.

Agee suspects that one of the reasons the British government might be trying to deport him is an embarrassing spate of articles on the CIA in the European press. "I may be a stimulus to other people to investigate what the CIA is doing," says Agee. Some of Europe's best journalists have been uncovering some curious things.

For instance, while the Church Committee looked into CIA operations in Chile from 1963 to 1973, who should be sitting in Room 382 of London's U.S. Embassy as local CIA chief but Cord Meyer Jr. He was one of the key figures in the $10 million CIA

WIDE WORLD

Agee: Kicking out the former spy

intervention in the 1964 Chilean election. Cord Meyer coordinated in Santiago as the money was channeled into political parties, student fronts, the media, labor unions and peasant organizations. The bargain-basement attempt by the South Korean CIA to buy American congressmen seems, by comparison, the work of pikers. Before going to Chile, Meyer helped establish a whole series of CIA-funded European fronts in the 1950s in labor, education, cultural and student activities. Now Cord Meyer was back in Europe. The *London Sunday Times* magazine, on June 15, 1975, featured a Meyer profile, complete with photographs of this chief covert operator being limousined to work.

Earlier, *Red Weekly,* a small London paper, had published the names, addresses and some photographs of the entire CIA contingent operating under official cover in the U.S. Embassy—some 60 people. Stan Newens, a Labor Member of Parliament, and 49 other M.P.'s demanded that Prime Minister Wilson initiate a parliamentary investigation into the CIA's activities. After all, they said, if the British government felt it necessary to kick out 105 alleged KGB agents in 1971, why should the CIA and Cord Meyer be allowed to go about their business when at that very moment a U.S. Senate committee was documenting the undermining of a Democratic government in Chile.

Then evidence surfaced in London's *Time Out* magazine that a British think tank, the Institute for the Study of Conflict, and an associated London-based "news" agency, Forum World Features, had been set up with CIA money. Rather than simply reporting news, Forum World Features was in the business of manufacturing and disseminating propaganda and even "disinformation" that supported U.S. policy in different parts of the world, including Vietnam and Chile. "The British people were subjected to this propaganda operation," says Agee, "without knowing that the materials such as books and feature articles were actually subsidized and paid for by the CIA." A confidential memorandum on Forum World Features prepared in 1968 for CIA chief Richard Helms indicated that this was being done with the knowledge and approval of British Intelligence. This put the British service in the curious position of allowing the CIA to propagandize British citizens, in an operation paralleling the CIA's dirty tricks in third world countries.

Meanwhile, Robert Moss, closely connected to the Institute for the Study of Conflict, was not only writing articles and books supporting the Chilean Junta—issued by the CIA-funded Rossiter Publishing Company—but also writing speeches for Conservative party head Margaret Thatcher.

With the economic situation in England worsening, Milton Friedman, chief economic adviser to the Chilean Junta, recently predicted on CBS' *60 Minutes* that England would go the way of Chile. The British elite have been concerned that the deterioration of the social and economic situation could lead to their loss of control. Former Conservative Prime Minister Harold MacMillan even saw fit to break a 12-year political silence to warn that Great Britain faced "a communist revolution." To deal with the threat of domestic unrest Brian Crozier, head of the CIA-funded Institute for the Study of Conflict, was suggesting that it was time for Britain to have an armed internal-security police force. This alarmed some members of the Labor party, particularly when *Time Out* revealed that in 1972 the Confederation of British Industry—which has as its members Britain's major industrialists—had urged its members to support the Institute for the Study of Conflict. Some Britons remembered that a similar organization of Chilean businessmen, the Sociedad de Fomento Fabril (SOFOFA), worked closely with the CIA

to overthrow the Allende government.

Inspired in part by Agee, the British press revealed that the CIA has been developing assets and cultivating potential leaders in England since the 1940s. For instance, Anthony Crosland, the British Foreign Secretary, who has been busy huddling with Kissinger over the talks on Rhodesia, got his start in 1947 in the Labor party. Crosland was closely associated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom, a CIA front set up in the early 1950s by Cord Meyer and others.

One of the CIA's principal aims in the 1940s and 1950s was to move the Labor party to the right, away from the nationalization of major industries. With the left threatening to come to power in several European countries, the CIA has work cut out for itself in the next several years. The agency has no desire to carry out its tasks with an experienced covert operator looking over its shoulder, particularly one like Agee who personally knows many of its present employees.

Agee told us, "James Angleton, the former CIA counterintelligence chief, has been saying lately that there was pressure on the British government even before I came here, so that they wouldn't allow me to come or finish the research on my book or get it written and published here."

Agee also said that the move to deport him "did not come up as an internal security case, as would be the normal circumstance, but that it came from the British Foreign Intelligence Service, that is, the MI6, and it was passed over to the Home Office for action."

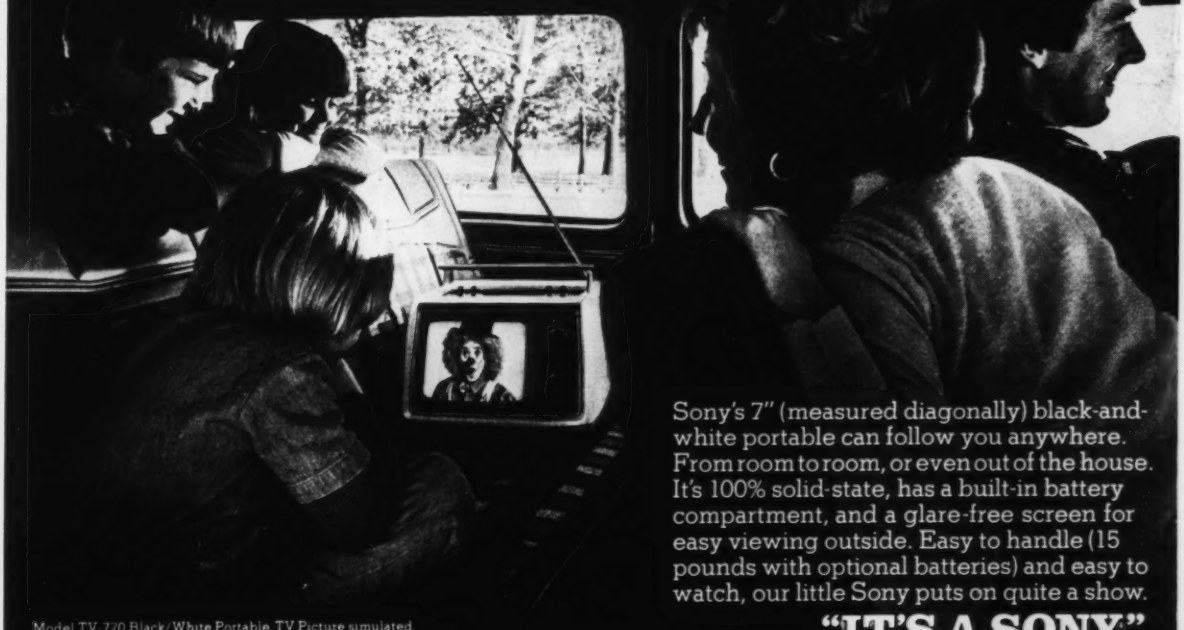
While working for the Agency in Latin America, Agee was involved in framing people with forged documents. He suspects that the CIA has now faked "evidence" making him appear a threat to British national security. But since the deportation hearings do not involve any due process procedures, Agee will not be allowed to ask the government to produce evidence or cross-examine witnesses. "It's a kind of kangaroo court or Kafkaesque procedure," says Agee, "and it's never been used before."

But the CIA and the British government might have underestimated the response. Already 150 Members of Parliament from all parties have come out against the deportation. The National Executive Board of the Labor party denounced the government's move, and the National Council on Civil Liberties—Britain's ACLU—is defending Agee. The National Union of Journalists called the deportation move "a shoddy deal." Britons are asking why the government does not press charges against Agee. "Practically everyone is saying, well, after all, if he's guilty, then charge him in open court and give him a chance to defend," says Agee. Agee presented his case before the Immigration Board on January 11. At a later hearing, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and former National Security Council aide Morton Halperin testified in Agee's defense. A decision is pending. Meanwhile, he's made it clear that he will not be intimidated. Agee has three books in progress, each of which promises to further document that the CIA is not so much an intelligence-gathering organization as a political police force similar to its offspring: the Korean CIA, Iran's SAVAK, Chile's DINA and others.

Could Great Britain really go the way of Chile? Tom Litterick, a Labor Member of Parliament from Birmingham and one of the M.P.'s calling for the 1975 CIA inquiry, thinks so. Litterick says, "If the British government or one of the British political parties threatens the interests of ITT, Chrysler, Dow Chemical and other American companies, considering the history of the last 20 years, can we safely assume that the CIA will sit idly by? I doubt it, I doubt it very much."

—Allan Frankovich and Howard Dratch

AUTO SHOW



Sony's 7" (measured diagonally) black-and-white portable can follow you anywhere. From room to room, or even out of the house. It's 100% solid-state, has a built-in battery compartment, and a glare-free screen for easy viewing outside. Easy to handle (15 pounds with optional batteries) and easy to watch, our little Sony puts on quite a show.

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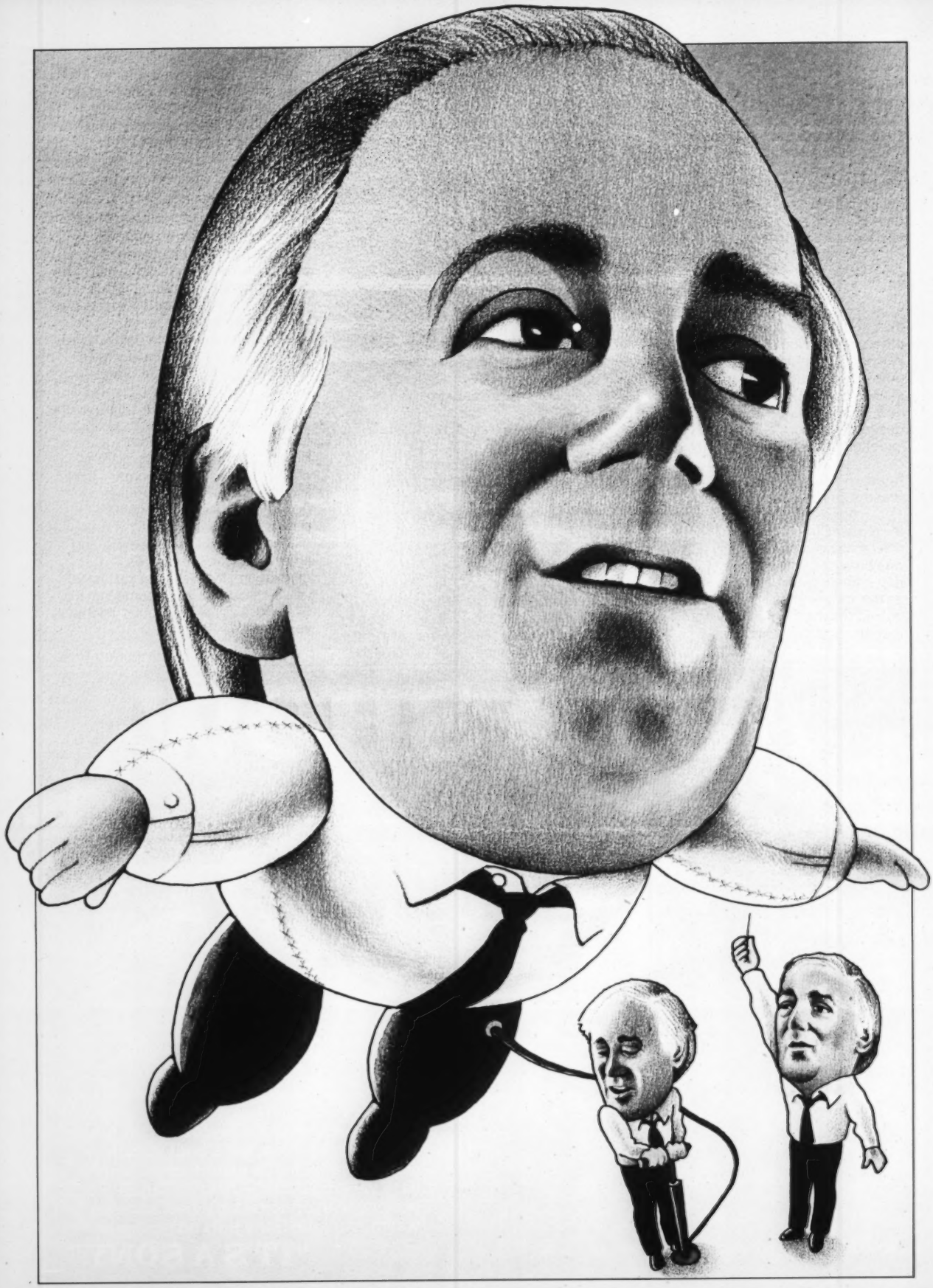

Clay Felker was the only executive in Manhattan with a self-destruct button on his desk

Requiem for a Winner

By Lucian K. Truscott IV

Last summer, Clay Felker was the Concorde of journalism—everybody wanted a seat. With New York, *the* Village Voice *and* New West *in L.A., he was the toast of both coasts. When he walked into Chasen's, tables literally turned. At Elaine's, while he wolfed his fettucini, writers tapped at him like woodpeckers. For almost ten years, from the outside, Felker looked like a genius: a brilliant editor, a powerful publisher, a successful businessman in the tough world of big-time magazine publishing. His name kept appearing in salty little column items—lunch with Governor Jerry Brown of California; evenings on the town with investment banker and Big Mac chairman Felix Rohatyn; openings with* Washington Post *owner Kay Graham clinging to his sleeve; nuzzling "frequent companion" and best-selling author Gail Sheehy in the pages of* People. . . .

Felker floated his image the way a city in debt floats a bond issue: with hustle, hype and other people's money. He created a dream, the Clay Felker dream, of instant success, stardom, the pleasures of the temporary life. The Clay Felker dream was a terminal extension of the American dream. The pages of New York, New West, *and the* Village Voice *carried a subtle message to readers: if you want people to believe you're successful, wealthy, sophisticated,* act *that way. You, too, can be Robert Evans.*

In 1968, when Felker started it, New York *was synonymous with the New Journalism: Gloria Steinem on The Night Martin Luther King Died; Tom Wolfe on Radical Chic; Gail Sheehy on Speed Junkies: Jimmy Breslin on The Assassination of Robert Kennedy; Adam Smith on Wall Street. As an editor, Felker had a Madison Avenue knack for "now," a nose for the essence of the present tense. But, perhaps, out of a growing sense that "readers" no longer had time to read, he gradually evolved* New York *into a collapsible magazine filled with disposable articles. Stick-to-your-ribs journalism gave way to fast-food information. Every issue gave you just enough unabashed consumer narcissism to get through next week's cocktail parties—"What! Your life isn't working? Get behind the best cheesecake in New York. . . . " Everything about the magazine said the world was on sale, and the sale ended Thursday.*

Much to everyone's surprise, even New York Magazine Co., Inc., was for sale, and there is no finer testament to Felker's special brand of journalism than to see Rupert Murdoch, the Australian press baron who bought him out, trying to do Clay's thing without Clay. Slick journalism without Felker is Bloomingdale's without windows, Elaine's without Elaine.

The February 14 issue of New York *is a perfect example: the compulsory man and woman on the cover, very Upper East Side, she with a drink in hand, he with a guide of some sort, no doubt* New York *itself, in search of the perfect $50-a-head restaurant. Ditto the cover lines: "The City For Lovers: Marlo Thomas Tours the New Trysting Places," "The Most Sinfully Delicious Chocolates in Town," "Do Body Rhythms Really Make You Tick?" Perfect Felker topics. A perfect Felker cover. Open it up, though, and slick turns to slack: the City for Lovers piece consists of one paragraph, a bunch of photos with long captions and a hype for Marlo Thomas' latest vehicle. The February 14* New York *is ersatz Felker.*

"It's the end of an era," Robert Towbin, NYM Inc. board member, declared recently. "I saw Gael Greene* [New York *restaurant columnist] at a party the other night, and she pointed at me and said, 'That's the guy who sold us out! Towbin.' Hell, we didn't sell anyone out," Towbin says almost wistfully. "We were bought out, and so was Felker. The really sad thing is this: it didn't have to*

*New York Magazine Co., Inc., will be hereafter referred to as NYM Inc.—not to be confused with NYM Corporation, a subsidiary of New York Magazine Co., Inc.

ILLUSTRATION BY BILL NELSON

happen. Clay could have had 12 good friends on his board, and together we could have withstood any kind of hostile takeover Rupert mounted. Instead, Clay alienated us one by one . . . ."

Another board member put the matter more directly. "Clay Felker," he said, "was the only executive in Manhattan with a self-destruct button on his desk."

Indeed, as the smoke cleared from one of journalism's strangest, swiftest coups, it became more and more apparent that the collapse of Felker's publishing empire last month was hardly what it seemed to readers, staff and the rest of the media: a sudden and unexpected maneuver by an unscrupulous entrepreneur. The sellout to Rupert Murdoch was just the final step in a process of internal dissent and decay, the last schmalzy scene in a continuing boardroom soap opera that rivaled anything shown on CBS' Executive Suite *or written by Harold Robbins. Felker's publications marketed the ways of power, preached the gospel of success. How could it have occurred to the million readers of Felker's journalism on both coasts (and in sophisticated pockets in between) that the founder of eat-your-heart-out journalism was himself eating his heart out for more success, more money? How could they have known that Felker's little empire was not the most successful publishing venture since Hefner discovered the airbrush?*

Felker was obsessed by power, and because his obsession was reflected week after week in the pages of his magazines, he appeared powerful himself. Appearances were all that really mattered. "Felker got caught in a famous trap in the publishing business," said Edwin Fancher, for 20 years the publisher of the Village Voice *and just one of the many men Felker walked over on his way to power. "His ego was completely involved in growth in a Madison Avenue image sense. To Felker, growth was expanding, blowing up the Madison Avenue balloon. He was much more interested in appearing successful than in real success itself, the numbers at the bottom line."*

But Felker explains the waning days of NYM Inc. this way: "I wanted to build rapidly and plow profits into growth. This was the thing which was driving me crazy. We were in a phase of rapid, significant expansion, and it was important for us as a company to spend three to five years devoting resources to it." But the equation in Felker's mind between spending and growth omitted the bottom line.

The awful truth about NYM Inc. is shown best in dollars and cents. The Voice *was half as profitable under Felker as it was under its old management.* New York *profits for 1976 are virtually the same as for 1975. "The jury is still out" on* New West, *as Felker's publicists put it, but for the time being, the new California venture has cost NYM Inc. money for four quarters in a row. Stock prices for NYM Inc. in 1976 hovered around the $2 mark and didn't move.*

In 1975, the last year NYM Inc. turned a profit, Felker earned 3 cents for every dollar he spent. This was his idea of growth, finally, and in the end, he admits, it was his empire building that brought him down.

"I guess," Felker reflected recently, "the beginning of the end for me was when we bought the Village Voice."

Lucian K. Truscott IV, an Alicia Patterson Fellow, thinks he is the John Wayne of the New Journalism.

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED W. McDARRAH

Bartle Bull: "Carter called it Felker's *putsch*. He thought he could make peace with Felker by going along with him. I said, 'This guy is crazy. He's invading Europe. Patricof and Towbin are Poland and Czechoslovakia, and I'm France. I'm next. You're Norway. You're going too.' Carter says, 'No, no'"

Decline and Fall

December, 1973: Felker and Alan J. Patricof, chairman of the board of NYM Inc., meet with Peter Tufo, lawyer for Carter Burden, majority stockholder of the *Village Voice*. It is understood that Burden wants to sell. Asking price: $8 million. Patricof thinks this is ridiculous, recommends against buying the *Voice* as "too fragile," a potentially dangerous acquisition. Felker tells Patricof: "The magazine business is going to hell, paper costs are up, it's getting tougher and tougher to make a profit. Newspapers are the future, and we can take the *Voice* national." Patricof disagrees. "You're not supporting me," says Clay. "I'm bringing in Felix [Rohatyn]."

"You've got to understand Clay's attitude," recalls Patricof. "He doesn't know what the word negotiate means. His position is: This is what I want. If you don't give it to me, you're the enemy. So Clay launches a six-month campaign to woo Carter Burden, to bring his price down. Carter wasn't acting all that anxious to sell. Clay was too eager to buy. This is not the way you go about acquiring companies."

Neither Patricof nor Felker knew that Burden had engaged the services of White, Weld & Co., an investment banking firm. Burden *was* eager to sell, so eager, in fact, that White, Weld had put him in touch with Rupert Murdoch. Over lunch at the Carlyle Hotel one day, Burden and Murdoch discussed a possible deal. Nothing came of it. Burden recalls that Murdoch "didn't seem right at the time." But Murdoch apparently decided to play a waiting game. Let Felker acquire the *Voice*. Watch it for a couple of years, see what Felker is able to do with it. Burden won't sell quickly. If he was still interested after he'd had a good look, there would be plenty of time to make his move. Murdoch did exactly that.

January, 1974: Felker is moving on Burden. He is trying to convince Burden that the *Voice* could possibly go under within a year, and that he, Felker, could "turn it around." He could jump circulation from its present static 150,000 to 200,000 by Christmas, and to 250,000 by June 1975. All we have to do, Felker assures Burden, is axe the antiquated ways of the old *Voice* and install some "standard, but expensive publishing techniques: promotion campaigns, comprehensive marketing techniques, Los Angeles or Chicago sales offices." Today, Burden admits that he was "seduced." Others, principally Bartle Bull, Burden's partner at the *Voice*, aren't so

sure. "Carter just wanted the money," Bull says. He was up against the wall on signature loans he had taken out in order to purchase control of the *Voice* in 1970 from Daniel Wolf, Edwin Fancher and Norman Mailer, who founded the paper.

Finally Burden, without his partner's knowledge, much less the knowledge of Wolf or Fancher, who were still nominally in charge of the paper and who owned large blocks of stock, negotiates the sale of the *Voice* through his lawyer, Tufo. "Can you believe it?" asks Bull in retrospect. "There I was, president of the corporation, paying this guy Tufo his legal fees, signing the fucking checks, and he's selling the floor out from under me."

Mid-May, 1974: Before the *Voice* purchase could be concluded, recalls Patricof, "a new contract for Felker became a big part of the deal. Here we were, about to spend a fortune in cash and stock [about $5 million], and Felker wants a raise. I was appointed to negotiate the Felker/Glaser contract. Clay hired a consultant—at company expense. He wanted $125,000 a year, 75,000 shares of stock at $2 per share with a loan to buy them [$150,000] and a bonus deal based on a 7 percent increase each year; on top of this, the 7 percent represented meeting only 80 percent of *his own budget projections*. He also wanted an unlimited expense account with no provisions for approval by the board. The only thing he didn't get was the $125,000. He got $120,000 instead."

June 4, 1974: Felker and Burden shake hands. Lawyers devise a contract that will eventually give Burden and Bull $800,000 in cash, and control of over a third of NYM Inc. stock. (Burden, 24 percent; Bull, 10 percent). The rights of first refusal clause becomes an issue. Patricof wanted the corporation to have the first right to buy Burden's stock should Burden want to sell out. Felker wanted to *personally* have the right to buy Burden out. Felker gets his way.

Question: Just who bought out whom? What was popularly perceived to be NYM Inc. buying out the *Voice* could in another way be perceived as Bull and Burden buying NYM Inc., or at least a significant portion thereof. Felker assumes the first, begins acting.

July 9, 1974: Wolf and Fancher are summarily fired by Felker.

Mid-August–Fall, 1974: Felker moves Bartle Bull, the *Voice* publisher, out of his office on the fifth floor to "exile" on the third floor. Felker hires executives at the *Voice* without consulting Bull. Meanwhile, Felker moves to completely change the character of the *Voice*. The paper gets a new "look" à la Milton Glaser (Felker's design director at *New York* and long-time partner). Front pages that once shot at the news from foxholes just beneath the surface of the establishment now blaze with movie star interviews and gratuitous attacks on figures such as Margaux Hemingway and Linda McCartney. Bull looks to support from Carter, does not find it.

Patricof: "I did my share to save Bartle. But Clay was yelling that Bartle was worthless, getting in the way. He was incredible when he screamed about Bartle. You wouldn't believe it."

Bob Towbin: "I was originally in favor of buying the *Voice because* of Bartle. I took a look at the *Voice* figures and said wow! They were unbelievable compared to *New York* magazine. I figured Bartle was helping run things down there, and one good thing we'd get out of the *Voice* deal was somebody who really knew publishing. But Felker hated Bartle. He started undercutting him right from the day we made the deal. Clay said the *Voice* could contribute $1 million a year to our earnings, but only if he was running things. I told him he'd never do it. He would never be able to keep his costs down. Bartle could have helped."

Felker receives a confidential report that projects *Voice* earnings over a three-year period (if the old management had stayed on). Before-tax earnings are projected at $1 million for 1975, $1.2 million for 1976 and $1.5 million in 1977. This is no doubt the source for Felker's statement to Towbin that the *Voice* could account for $1 million or more in pre-tax earnings for NYM Inc.

Winter, 1974–75: Felker institutes a new *Village Voice* reader survey to replace the version that had been kicking around the office for a year. Felker's conclusion from the 1974–75 reader survey: "We found that a lot of people in New York simply did not like the *Voice*. I was doing everything I knew how to do, and nothing seemed to work. We were doing huge promotional campaigns, radio advertising, trade-off ads with other publications, every kind of promotion I could think of. We were putting out the best editorial we could conceive of, with the best production, the best graphics. Milton and I worked long and hard on this. Our reputations were on the line. But it seemed as if there was an in-

The Players

Felker Enemies

Alan J. Patricof, chairman of the board, NYM Inc., president of Alan Patricof Associates, Inc., a private investment concern. Patricof had been with *New York* since the beginning. He was a "numbers man," and his fights with Felker were frequent and bitter. Patricof owned 25,120 shares of NYM Inc.

A. Robert Towbin, board member, NYM Inc., partner in C.E. Unterberg, Towbin Co., an investment banking firm. Towbin, along with Patricof, was the target of a March 1975 *putsch*. He owned 12,000 shares, and his firm handled a significant block of public shares.

Carter Burden, vice-chairman of the board of directors, city councilman, single largest shareholder with 425,452 shares. Sold the *Village Voice* in June 1974 to NYM Inc. in return for big bucks and 24 percent of the company. Felker *personally* held rights of first refusal on Burden's stock.

Bartle Bull, board member, publisher of *Firehouse* magazine, Burden's college friend. Bull owned 10 percent of NYM Inc., which he got in Burden's *Voice* deal. (Bull was Burden's man at the *Voice*, before Felker.) Felker moved to oust him as publisher and president of the *Voice* almost as soon as he had Fancher, the previous publisher, out the door.

Peter F. Tufo, board member, partner in Tufo, Johnston & Allegaert, a law firm. Carter Burden's lawyer. Owned 250 shares. Described by Felker as "Burden's hit man."

Felker Friends

Himself, president and board member of NYM Inc. Owned 178,150 shares.

Milton Glaser, vice-president and board member; design director of all three NYM Inc. publications. A founder of the company, Glaser was Felker's right-hand man. Owned 52,180 shares.

Mary Joan Glynn, board member; director of the Borghese Division of Revlon, Inc. Installed as a Felker vote during 1975 *putsch*. Described by three "enemies" of Felker as "Clay's girlfriend." Owned no shares.

Theodore W. Kheel, board member, partner in Battle, Fowler, Lidstone, Jaffin, Pierce & Kheel, NYM Inc.'s law firm. Famous labor negotiator. Describes himself as "close friend and adviser" of Clay. Owned 5,000 shares.

James Q. Wilson, board member, professor of government, Harvard University. Owned 500 shares.

grained hatred for the *Voice* among certain New Yorkers." The survey was suppressed, according to Bartle Bull, who was still hanging onto the publisher's title by his fingernails. Felker was not interested in information that did not support him. He forged on, initiating plans for a national *Voice* that would be even better than the one New Yorkers hated. Four-color covers. More movie stars. More zip. More flash.

Mid-March, 1975: Burden tells Bull that Felker will try to vote Patricof and Towbin off the NYM Inc. board of directors at the next day's board meeting. "He called it Felker's *putsch*," recalls Bull. "Carter thought he could make peace with Felker by going along with him. I said,'This guy is crazy.He's invading Europe. Patricof and Towbin are Poland and Czechoslovakia, and I'm France. I'm next. You're Norway. You're going too.' Carter says,'No, no. This is going to make me stronger on the board. I'm putting on Gordon Davis. He'll vote with us.'I said 'Yes,and Felker gets his pal Joan Glynn. What good is this?'Clay says Carter will sell out anyone. Now he was going to sell out Patricof and Towbin to get one uncertain vote on the board. I knew I was next."

Patricof's recollection of the *putsch* is similar: "A board meeting was coming, the first one I'd ever missed since 1968. I had to go to Chicago for a board meeting of the Pullman Corporation. I arrived at 9 a.m., and there are messages from Towbin and Kheel. Kheel had met Towbin for breakfast that morning and told him we were going to be replaced by a black and a woman. Towbin went crazy. Clay had been after Carter, badgering him for months about us. We didn't support him; we had to go. I'm in the Pullman boardroom, and the phone is ringing every ten minutes. I left after an hour, caught the 1 p.m. plane back to New York. Towbin was beside himself. He called Tommy Kempner [a director and partner in Loeb, Rhoades & Co., an investment banking firm], and Kempner called John Loeb. Clay always had this image of John Loeb as the President or something. So anyway, Kempner calls Felker and Loeb calls Felker, and all of this is going on while I'm in the air, flying to New York. I got in at 4 p.m., took a cab, and arrived at the meeting at 4:30, half an hour late. I walked in, there I was, the chairman of the board, and I'm shaking like a leaf I'm so pissed. Towbin and Kempner pass me a note that says: 'Relax. Everything is taken care of. Clay is milk and honey. Joan Glynn and Gordon Davis have been added to the board, that's all.' Loeb and Kempner scared Felker off, and the *putsch* was over.

"After the meeting, Milton, Clay and I went into an adjoining room, and Clay goes into his number: 'You fucked me, Patricof. You fucked me back in the beginning. You fucked me out of $5,000 on my contract. You fucked me when I tried to get rid of Bartle. You undermine my management of the company by asking too many questions about the budget.' This would happen every time we had a fight, Felker is screaming and claiming that I was undercutting everything he was trying to do, almost like I was the only one on the board with questions. By this time, almost a year has gone by since we got the *Voice*, and we've all seen the numbers. Circulation is down, profits are down, he's spending money like it's coming up out of the ground. So I told him I was finished listening to him abuse and insult me and I walked out. Things were never the same between us."

May, 1975: Bartle Bull resigns from the *Voice*. "Who's going to fight Felker with me?" asks Burden. "You got in bed with him," answers Bull, "you sleep with him."

Summer– Fall, 1975: Planning begins for *New West*. Patricof: "I was in favor of *New West*. Everyone was. But I was concerned that Felker would do the same thing that he was doing at *New York* and the *Voice*. You've got to remember that the first issue of *New York* came out with 100 pages, and it was put out by 30 people. Eight years later the magazine is still 100 pages and has a staff of 135. Publishing is a leverage business. Start-up costs are high, but once you turn the corner, every issue should earn some bucks. In 1974, we were operating at an after-tax profit of about 4 percent, and that included the *Voice*, which at the time was more profitable than *New York*. We had revenues of about $14 million, and operating expenses of about $13 million. In other words, for every dollar we spent, we were getting about three cents. Is this any way to run a business?"

In the fall, NYM Inc. board of directors approves start-up money for office space in L.A., a skeleton staff for *New West* and market research. However, Felker hires a large staff and goes far over budget on promotion.

Towbin: "*New West* was an incredible idea, but at the same time, I'm asking myself, why is Clay hiring all these people? It has to do with his obsession with power. The thing which obsessed him, he never really understood. Strange to say, but he never really understood the power of the printed word. He didn't understand that a piece had power because it could change people's sensibilities, or give them a new way of looking at things, like [Jack] Newfield's "Ten Worst Judges" piece. But Clay never *felt* it. When he walked into his office and saw all those people laboring away in their little cubicles, now that was power to Clay."

December, 1975: Felker wants a new contract. Patricof: "It was exactly like the weeks preceding the *Voice* merger. Here we are, less than a year and a half after he signed his last contract, we're getting ready to lay out a fortune on *New West*—it was budgeted initially at $2.1 million—and Clay is holding us up for more money for him and Milton. He's the genius of the Western World. He's starting a new magazine and it's going to make us a fortune, and if we don't give him a new contract, he's going to quit.

"We meet, and he says, 'I'm starving, I'm in debt, I'm paying off my co-op. I'm underpaid and I can make more money anyplace else.' Then he says, 'I'm holding you *personally responsible* to get me a new contract. You *will* spearhead an effort to get me a significant increase in salary and benefits. You cheated me in 1974'—it's the same old litany—'You tricked me. That bonus arrangement. You *knew* I couldn't meet those budgets.' And I'm saying, 'But Clay, we took *your* figures, and then we said you had to come within only 80 percent of your own figures and you'd get a bonus.' He didn't get the bonus because he didn't come near the budget. 'But it was a trick,' he says. 'The dividends are a trick.' I said, 'Clay, how can 10 cents a share be a trick?' 'It's all applied against my loan the company gave me for more stock!' he screams. 'I never see a penny!' 'But Clay,' I'm saying, 'you got the stock.' And he's complaining that he doesn't own a big enough piece of the stock. Listen. At any point over the years since we started *New York* magazine Clay could have taken equity in the company in lieu of cash. And by this time, equity meant cash. We paid a 10 cent dividend in 1974, and would pay another 10 cent dividend in 1975. If the company was more profitable, we would have been paying more. But Clay was never focused on performance. He was focused on short-term gains: guarantees and fixed amounts. He never understood the basic truth that performance equals profits equals cash. He always said he wanted a piece of his own future, but I'm not sure that he ever really believed it."

Felker: "I was going broke. I was

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going deeper into debt every year. How was this happening on $120,000 a year? Well, I'm single, and I've always been in the 50 percent tax bracket, so that means I'm really living on $60,000 a year. And I never got a bonus. *Never*. I've been living in the same apartment for 14 years, since the days of the *Herald Trib*. The combination of maintaining my co-op and the interest on various loans I received over the years to buy stock in the company, well, $60,000 doesn't go very far when you've got a lot of interest to pay. I never had enough money to get into the tax shelters the rest of the board had. I had to use my salary to meet my own expenses. But my main problem with the board back then [winter 1975–76] and right through to the end, the thing which was driving me crazy, was the basic philosophy of the way we ran the company. I wanted to build rapidly and plow profits back into growth, and the board wanted to maximize short-term profits and pay dividends."

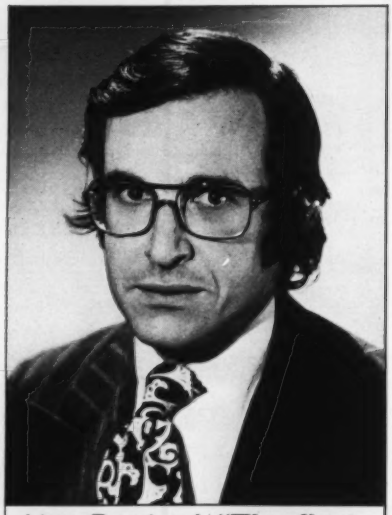
Burden: "He was living a total expense account life. At one point, we found out that his maid was on the company payroll. I don't know where his money was going. To tell the truth, I never understood Clay and his thing about his salary."

Meanwhile, according to members of the board, Felker formed an organization within the organization to plead his case: Ted Kheel, on retainer to NYM Inc. at $25,000 a year for "personal professional services," and Jules Kroll, a professional consultant, also paid $25,000 a year.

Felker's final demand was that he would quit if he didn't get what he wanted.

Winter, 1975–76: NYM Inc. board approves a start-up budget of $2.1 million for *New West*. Felker will eventually exceed this budget by more than $2 million. Meanwhile, planning for the magazine continues. Felker is flying from coast to coast, overseeing plans, hiring staff. At the same time, he is meeting privately with individual board members about his contract.

At a party that winter, Felker stayed uncharacteristically late and got uncharacteristically tipsy (he normally drinks very little, if at all). It got to be 12:30 a.m., then 1 a.m., and still Felker was hanging on, talking about *New West*, talking about his problems with the board. Everybody is always so down on him, he is saying. It doesn't have to be that way. Finally Felker corners one of the members of the board, with whom he had often disagreed, and with tears in his eyes, obviously jet-lagged, overwrought



Alan Patricof: **"The first issue of *New York* came out with 100 pages, and it was put out with 30 people. Eight years later the magazine is still 100 pages and has a staff of 135. For every dollar we spent, we were getting about three cents. Is this any way to run a business?"**

from working too hard and sleeping too little, Felker lets go: "Don't you see?" he pleads. "Don't you understand? I know I've been difficult, but I want you to believe in me. I want you to believe that I can be as good as you. Don't you see? I'm a businessman, just like you." Felker is actually weeping. The few people remaining in the room fall silent. No one knows what to do. No one moves. Eventually, Felker goes home.

The next day, Felker calls the board member. He is chipper on the phone, full of ideas for *New West*, as always. It was, the board member recalls, as if the night before had never happened.

Felker's new demands: $150,000 salary; purchase by NYM Inc. of Felker's co-op; $180,000 in a trust fund, payable to Felker at the end of the contract period; $180,000 as a sign-up bonus; turning back his 1974 loan and stock (75,000 shares at $2 per), in return for 200,000 shares of NYM Inc., *free*; a guaranteed annual bonus of $30,000.

"You know the definition of *chutzpah*, don't you?" asked one director. "A guy kills his mother and father and pleads for mercy from the court because he's an orphan. This was Clay with his contract demands."

April 30, 1976: Patricof, Towbin, Burden, Kempner, Davis, Tufo and Bull meet at the New York Stock Exchange Luncheon Club. According to several of those present, Towbin makes a pitch for the board to accept Felker's demands. "If we don't like what happens with *New West*, we can always fire him," Towbin reportedly says. The others remain unconvinced. Several consider that Towbin has been Felkerized. He's made several expense-account trips to the West Coast with Felker, including one to attend the Academy Awards.

That afternoon, the board meets and Towbin announces that he couldn't get a majority to go along with Felker's contract demands.

"You tricked me!" Felker reportedly shouts. "You said you had it all set!"

May, 1976: Kheel, Kempner and Burden form a committee and hire two consultants to come up with a new contract proposal. It is described by one board member as "a deal I would have left my career to accept."

Basically, the proposal gave Felker the following: $125,000 salary; a cash bonus of $30,000 for 1975; a $30,000 bonus for each subsequent year that the *Voice* and *New York* meet the 1975 earnings of the two publications; $3,000 a year for financial counseling; incentive bonuses based on increases of earnings of the *Voice* and *New York* on a sliding scale above 7 percent; 12 percent of annual net pretax earnings of *New West* if actual earnings are within 80 percent of projected earnings. This would apply *for life* (10 percent to Felker, 2 percent to Glaser) if the venture did not exceed $4.1 million in start-up costs.

June 15, 1976: Felker turns the contract down, labeling it another "trick," because his friend Kheel had reservations about two clauses. Two weeks later, Felker says he hadn't turned it down, he'd only wanted changes. But by now, the board is fed up. The contract proposal was potentially the fattest ever offered Felker, and as one board member said, "We just gave up. After that, we knew he couldn't be dealt with. It was insane."

July 22, 1976: Patricof meets with Burden and Bull before a board meeting, at which Felker will make a final pitch for a better contract. Burden reportedly puffs his pipe and says, "Maybe we should sell him out to MCA and watch Lew Wasserman chew him up."

An hour later, Felker stands before a quorum of his board of directors

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with tears in his eyes. His graying, thinning hair is disheveled. "You don't understand!" he yells. "You're all rich kids! You grew up rich! You've all got houses in East Hampton! You don't know what it's like to come from Webster Groves, Missouri, and make it in New York!"

August, 1976: "It was," Alan Patricof said, "the official final beginning of the end for me." For Patricof, spending his first summer in the Hamptons in ten years, it all happened quickly, over one weekend. His closest friend approached him one Saturday and said that Felker was spreading the word all over the island that he was going to "get rid of Patricof." A woman who will be known here as "Deep Hampton" backed up the story. Patricof met her the next day, a rainy Sunday, and she outlined what Felker had said about him at a cocktail party—denigrations of character, threats, general ugliness. "But what she really did for me," Patricof recalls, "was to confirm how public it was. Felker had taken the fight out of the boardroom and into the parties. I decided right then and there that this thing had to stop." Thus began what Patricof privately referred to as the "breakfast campaign."

Patricof continued the breakfasts through August: He wooed Kempner, Towbin, Wilson, Glynn, Davis. None of the individual board members knew they were the objects of a campaign that ended in late August at breakfast at Carter Burden's, but all were there. Patricof focused on the issues. Costs at *New West* were spiraling upward, showing signs of passing the $4 million mark. A projection for the fall showed cash-flow deficits for September, October and November. Grim data.

Patricof emphasized spending. Editorial costs, legal costs, consultant costs, even messenger costs. (For example, entertainment and travel expenses for NYM Inc. for the first 11 months of 1976 totaled more than $186,000.) An additional and important element was the recent flop of the national *Voice*, a $200,000 loss which Felker had trumpeted as a raging success. This raised questions in the minds of more than one board member about *New West*. Carter Burden: "I was beginning to think that Felker's contract demands were a screen behind which he was hiding his own fear that *New West* would fail."

Still, the board was not ready to fire Felker. So there was discussion on how to exert authority over its own chief executive officer. It was suggested that an "executive committee" be formed to descend into the bowels of NYM Inc. to examine just where the money was coming from, and where it was going.

September 15: A revised contract proposal is presented to the board. The proposal costs-out to about the same as previous proposals (around $2 million) and this time includes a provision for the corporation to buy Felker's New York co-op and allow him to stay in it for free. It is a fat deal. Still, Felker has reservations. A good deal of the cash he could potentially realize depends on his meeting budgets.

September 29: Board meeting. The executive committee forms and is approved by the board, over Felker's heated objections. According to one present, Felker "attacked Patricof viciously." So viciously, in fact, that Patricof later consulted a libel lawyer.

October 1: Felker and Burden, a member of the new executive committee, lunch privately at the Player's Club near Gramercy Park. Unbeknownst to the other directors, Felker has a list of private demands for Burden.

Burden: "It was unbelievable. He'd been talking about this new proposal for three or four months, and he kept telling me, 'It's going to be big. You're not going to like it.' That doesn't begin to describe my reaction. In addition to his previous demands, Felker wanted to restructure the board with Patricof and Towbin off and to 'take the company private'; this would mean raising money to buy all publicly held shares at a time when the company is $4 million into *New West*, and showing cash-flow-deficit projections through the fall. Clay wanted 'absolute working control,' or he would quit.

"Then he said I was to sell him part of my stock. This would be good for me, he said, because he would arrange for the company to pay for my apartment and for a limousine and chauffeur. Then he promised to pay me $50,000 to $75,000 a year, just for sitting on the board, I guess. He told me if I didn't meet his demands by February 1977, he would quit.

"Of course, he'd been threatening to quit for 18 months. At the September 29 meeting, he stood up and yelled, 'I quit,' but never left the room, so it was never discussed any further. I guess it was at this lunch that I first really began to consider selling my shares.

"I had been satisfied with an investment that would be worth something five or ten years from now. But suddenly, listening to Felker, I began to see my stock hanging at $2 per share indefinitely. The thing I had to face was this: how much was my stock worth with Felker, and how much was it worth without him? We set up the executive committee because we felt Felker had deliberately exceeded his authority with the extra $2 million which had been spent on *New West*. That was a very fast $2 million. In the end, I guess both Felker and we on the board were at fault. Felker was less than forthright about the costs of *New West*, but we had let the thing get out of hand.

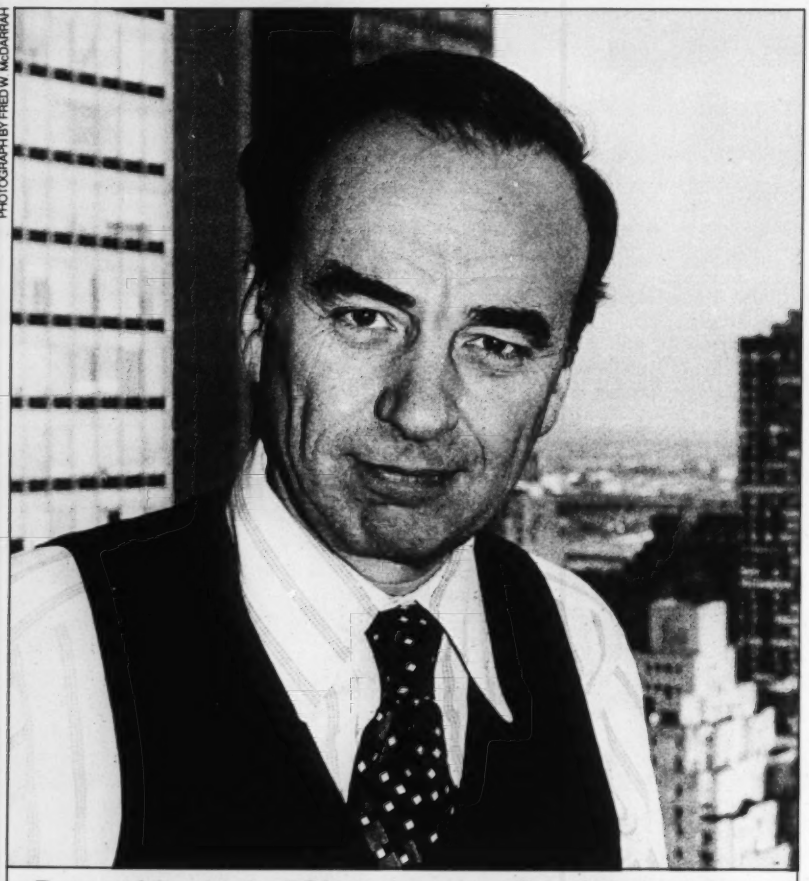
"Anyway," Burden recalls, "we went down to the NYM offices twice a week and went through the books. Felker was so uptight he would fly back from California the night before we were supposed to visit. One night I was leaving the NYM office and I saw this pathetic figure coming towards me on the street. His raincoat was open, and his head was bowed, staring at the sidewalk in front of him as he hurried along. He looked up and I saw it was Clay. He looked terrible, jet-lagged, worn out. He saw me and pulled me into a coffee shop and began a sob story that we were undercutting his authority, we were screwing him out of money, we were out to get him. It went on and on until finally I got away. The next day I spoke to him on the phone, and he was totally rational, talking about cutting costs, willing to compromise. Bartle used to use Churchill's old quote about the Germans to describe Felker: he's either at your throat or at your feet."

Fall, 1976: The word is out on the street that blocks of NYM Inc. stock are up for sale. Approaches are made to Carter Burden by the *L.A. Times* and by McGraw-Hill. An approach is made to Alan Patricof by Wolf and Fancher through an investment banker. Felker is talking to representatives of the Chicago-based Pritzker fortune, which owns *McCall's*; Peter Sharp, a Manhattan real estate magnate who owns the Carlyle Hotel; the Agnellis, who own Bantam Books; the Times-Mirror Co. Felker admits only to talking with the Pritzkers and Peter Sharp. He wants someone to either buy Burden out and give him the kind of contract his own board "denies" him, or to loan him the money to buy Burden out.

New West has by now made a big splash on the coast, but as one board member puts it: "Listen, I could advance you, advance *anybody* $4 million and you could go out there and make a big splash. Hell, for that kind of money, we could break the world land speed record, we could fly the Spruce Goose."

November 18: Patricof hears

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED W. McDARRAH



Rupert Murdoch: **"Clay never realized there are simple ways to deal with a board of directors. He could have had them to lunch twice a year with Teddy Kennedy or somebody. Instead, he made enemies of them one by one. He was afraid of them. . . ."**

from a "quiet yet powerful business friend" that Felker has been wheeling and dealing with the Pritzkers. The friend says the Pritzkers took a good look at NYM Inc. and "weren't turned on by the property." "They met with Clay," the friend asserts, "and said, 'there's no way anybody can deal with this guy. He doesn't know what he wants.' They don't want to inherit your problems."

November 19: The surprise sale of the New York *Post* to Rupert Murdoch is announced, by Dorothy Schiff, publisher. It's a handshake deal. Papers have yet to be signed.

November 20: Clay Felker, basking in press reports that he played a key role in setting up the deal between Murdoch and Schiff, invites Murdoch to "celebrate" at Elaine's, the Upper East Side watering hole. Present are: Murdoch; Clay and Gail Sheehy, his "frequent companion"; Pete Hamill and "frequent companion" Shirley MacLaine; Felix Rohatyn and an unidentified female. Murdoch describes the dinner this way: Shirley is badgering Rupert about Australia's relationship with Red China, of which he knows little. Pete is badgering Rupert about Murray Kempton, who should be hired as a columnist, which he eventually is. Gail is scanning the crowded room anxiously, looking for signs of anyone in the throes of a midlife crisis.

In a cab on the way back to Rupert's Fifth Avenue apartment, Felker tells Murdoch that he "must" see him. Murdoch has heard about Clay's problems with his board, but this time there is an urgency to Felker's voice that catches his ear. Could this be the long-awaited time to move on NYM Inc.? Ever since White, Weld, Murdoch had been playing a waiting game. A lunch date is made.

November 21: According to Murdoch, the day after the "celebration" at Elaine's, Felker called Schiff and told her that real estate man Peter Sharp would pay her more for the *Post* than Murdoch, and would make Felker editor and publisher. Schiff, according to Murdoch, made a note of the conversation and swears to its authenticity. Apparently, Felker believed that by setting up the Murdoch/Schiff deal, he'd have a foot in the publisher's office at the *Post*, in case he lost out at NYM Inc. "It must have dawned on him at dinner at Elaine's that despite his key role in the sale of the *Post*, I wasn't going to make him publisher. So, covering himself, Felker called Schiff with his counteroffer."

Felker admits to his conversation with Schiff, but says his reference to Sharp was made "jokingly," and that he was "never interested in the New York *Post*."

November 29: Murdoch lunches with Felker in the staff dining room at *New York* magazine. Murdoch, recalling the lunch, raises his eyebrows.

"Clay begins by running back over his troubles with the board. So I say, 'Listen Clay, you've got banking friends, Felix Rohatyn in particular, why don't you work it out with him?' Felker listens, but I never got the impression that he was focusing on his problem. He saw it in such narrow terms. Get rid of this guy, get rid of that guy—he figured all he had to do was get some of his friends on the board and everything would be OK. Well, things went on, and Clay let on that he might be looking for a buyer. I told him I had an investment banker who had worked for me in the New York *Post* negotiations. It was Stanley Shuman, and I said perhaps we can work something out. This seemed to perk Clay up. I had the feeling this was the first time anyone had talked seriously to him about buying into the corporation. We left the lunch with a commitment to get together the following week."

Felker's version: "I told him at lunch, 'You're a wiz at making these deals, Rupert. You know a lot about corporate structures and how to *operate*. This is not my great area of expertise.' I had been giving him a lot of advice in relation to the *Post*, names of editors and writers he should hire, all kinds of advice. He'd just call me up and I would give it out. In return, I was asking personal advice on how to get out from under these guys [the board]."

Felker and Murdoch differ significantly on the November 29 lunch. According to Murdoch, Felker was actively seeking a deal. According to Felker, he

was simply seeking the advice of a friend.

November 30: Shuman calls Patricof. They talk informally about who the major stockholders are. It is evident that with or without Felker, Murdoch has begun to move on NYM Inc.

December 2: Felker issues memos to his staffs denying an item in *Media Industry Newsletter* that NYM Inc. stock is up for sale. "I wish to state authoritatively and unequivocally that New York Magazine Company is not for sale. We are not negotiating with anyone nor will we. The only way this company can maintain its editorial independence and integrity is to remain independent."

December 3: Patricof meets Kheel at a party, and suggests that Felker should be busy finding a buyer for loose shares of NYM Inc., should make moves to "control his own destiny." Kheel asks: "Can I tell Clay?" Patricof almost chokes on his pastry-wrapped Vienna sausage.

December 9: Murdoch, Shuman and Felker meet at Murdoch's offices at 730 Third Avenue. As Murdoch recalls it, Clay was panicky. He knew the company was in sad shape, and that some board members were trying to sell it out from under him. "There was open hostility. They didn't trust him, he didn't trust them. The same old story. At lunch the week before, he had been talking about moving to L.A., going back and forth with Gail, keeping the apartment in New York at company expense, but essentially moving his base of operations to the West Coast. So I said to him, 'Listen, Clay, if you can't work with your own board, how can you expect to work with me? Shuman and I have talked this thing over, and we think we have a solution. You want to move to L.A.? Maybe we can make a deal. We'll buy the company. You'll walk away with something like $1 million after taxes. Then we'll spin off *New West*, make it a separate company, and you can buy in with your cash from the NYM Inc. sale. We'll even be willing to lend you some capital to buy yourself and Milton a larger piece of *New West*. And no matter how large a piece you buy, we'll be willing to give you voting rights over 51 percent of the board.'

"Clay's immediate response was: 'Will I *own* 51 percent?' That would depend, I explained, on how much capital he and Milton were able to raise to buy in. Then he wanted to know if we would be willing to lend the *New West* company $1.5 million in operating capital. I replied that might be arranged, but we would want some control until the loan was paid off. For a while there, I thought we were going to make a deal. But as soon as I mentioned control in return for the operating capital loan, he looked unhappy. The meeting ended, and we decided we'd talk later.

"Meanwhile, Shuman and I have learned that Felker is hawking the company all over town, looking for a deal."

Felker's version: Murdoch proposed a deal similar to the one described above. "But when I asked them about lending us some money for *New West*, he turned to Shuman, and Shuman nodded his head negatively. This is my best recollection. They were talking $5 per share to buy out NYM Inc., and then spin off *New West* as a separate company for me and Milton."

Shuman, referring to a diary he kept throughout these transactions: "Clay was looking for unfettered control over money and editorial in any kind of deal we made. We told him we'd be willing to buy NYM Inc. and set him up with *New West*. But nothing seemed to make him happy. He seemed to be living in a dream world. The one thing he was definite about was that he would never be able to deliver the board. But by that time, we had figured out the situation. We didn't need Clay to deliver the board. The board was ready to deliver the company without him."

A few days later, Felker called Murdoch and said he didn't "want to take this thing any further." But it was already too late. By now, Murdoch and Shuman are meeting with lawyers and mapping strategy. Their target is Carter Burden and his 24 percent of NYM Inc.

Murdoch: "Clay had really set himself up for the fall. There he was, personally holding the rights of first refusal over Carter's stock, and *he already knew we were moving on Carter*. You know what Gail Sheehy told Byron Dobell [Felker's managing editor at *New York*]? She said it was Clay's midcareer crisis. He was bored with *New York*, bored with the whole thing, but he was blocked. He had no easy way out. When he talked with us, she said, it was Clay's way of breaking through. If that's true, Clay Felker whetted our appetite. The more we looked at the property, the more we wanted it."

December 17: Murdoch and Shuman meet Tufo and his "frequent companion" Princess Lee Radziwill at Parioli Romanissimo on First Avenue.

Murdoch: "Incredible scene. Here we are, sitting around this table,

WIDE WORLD

Carter Burden: **"Felker said I was to sell him part of my stock. This would be good for me, he said, because he would arrange for the company to pay for my apartment and for a limousine and chauffeur. Then he promised to pay me $50,000 to $75,000 a year, just for sitting on the board, I guess. He told me if I didn't meet his demands by February 1977, he would quit"**

and I've got the Princess on my left, talking to me endlessly, and with the other ear I'm trying to overhear Shuman romancing Tufo, trying to bring the price down. Tufo was talking $7 a share, and our idea was around $6. So Shuman is laboring away with Tufo—he's much better at these things than I, actually—and I'm having to make two and a half hours of small talk with the Princess, which I'm even worse at. Incredible. Finally, Tufo's two-way radio goes off, and he has to rush to the prison or something, and we're saved. We left with no deal, but we figured that at $7 a share, we'd preempt anyone else interested in acquiring NYM."

That night, Tufo calls Burden in Sun Valley and tells him that $7 a share was the price, and that Murdoch was definitely interested. Burden instructs him to inform Felker.

December 21: Tufo calls Burden again and says that Murdoch is pressuring him to deal.

Burden: "For the first time, I really had to focus. Until then, I didn't know if my stock was worth anything without Felker. Now they wanted an answer in 24 hours. I told Tufo to tell them I wanted 10 days, and I told him to inform Felker. I asked Tufo if Murdoch knew about the stockholders agreement and the rights of first refusal clause, and he said, yes, they knew, but all legal opinions indicated that it wasn't in effect, because the company had lost money for four straight quarters. In any case, I wanted to give Clay a chance to make an offer, even though he had failed to inform us of all his dealings with the Pritzkers, and with Peter Sharp and others."

Felker: "I've made my position clear on Carter Burden, and I'll stick by it. He's a goddam incompetent little dilettante."

December 22: Tufo lunches at Felker's apartment, formally announces that Murdoch has offered $7 a share, that Burden is actively considering the offer, but that he wants to give Clay a chance. Felker's first response, according to a sworn affidavit from Tufo: "*He can have it.*" Felker maintains that he made no such statement. Then, according to Tufo, Felker said he wanted time to work out a deal that would give him 51 percent of the company. "Fine," said Tufo. "Go ahead." Burden has not made up his mind about Murdoch's offer, and has asked for 10 days to think things over.

That afternoon, Felker starts to move.

Murdoch: "Felker rang me up—it must have been right after he saw Tufo—and he was incredibly abusive. He was in the bullpen, at his desk in the office. I could hear people around him over the phone. He wanted an audience, and he was really giving it to me. 'I'll sue you, I'll finish you in this town'—he was making all kinds of threats. Then suddenly, after two or three minutes of abuse, he quieted down and was completely rational. He began telling me about his problems with the *Voice*. He said he had 'completely lost it,' lost a sense of what the paper was. The most recent issues had been the worst in the paper's history, he said. Then suddenly he's screaming at me again, threatening lawsuits, and I said, 'Look Clay, we're serious, but we haven't made up our minds. I'll get back to you.'"

Felker admits to the phone call, but denies having been abusive with Murdoch.

Late that afternoon, Murdoch, Tufo, Shuman and Burden have a conference call. As Shuman recalls the conversation, "We wanted to begin talking to other large stockholders, but Burden asked us to hold off. He wanted to give Clay his shot."

December 23: Tufo calls Burden and says Murdoch has agreed to hold off and give Burden time to make up his mind.

December 24: Burden, in Sun Valley, phones Felker at the NYM offices, fails to reach him. Burden tries the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, the Beverly Hills Hotel, finally calls the Lyford Cay Club in Nassau—no Felker. Felker had, in fact, gone to Nassau, where he stayed at David Frost's house. Asked why he left town in the middle of a fire storm, Felker replied simply: "I felt protected by my rights of first refusal clause. I don't know how to explain it to you. I just felt protected, that's all."

December 27: Burden finally reaches Felker in Nassau. The connection from Sun Valley is not good. The vacationers have trouble understanding each other.

Burden: "As Tufo told you, Clay, Murdoch is interested. It's a serious offer. But I'll give you a chance to come up with a counteroffer. I'll consider anything you propose, but remember, because Murdoch has promised to buy out all other stockholders at the price he offered me, you'll have to come up with the same sort of deal."

Felker: "You're going to be charged with selling out two New York publications! You're going to be the target of a huge publicity and legal battle! If I were you, I wouldn't want to take on Dick Reeves, let alone Clay Felker!"

According to Burden, Felker was enraged, but "We left it with him promising to come up with something by the end of the week."

Felker's recollection of the conversation completely omits the threats: "That's not the way it happened. It was a friendly conversation. I told Carter I'd buy out him and Bartle at $7 a share. I told him I knew Reeves had a particular dislike for him—he was convinced Burden was a phony liberal. I told Carter if he went through with the Murdoch deal, an awful lot of people were going to be mad at him."

December 29: Kay Graham, owner of the *Washington Post*, is about to offer to buy Burden out. Felker calls Burden. From Burden's sworn affidavit:

Felker: "I just want you to know how grateful I am for this opportunity. Maybe now we can finally be friends. I'll have a proposal by Friday [December 31]."

Burden: "The conversation was incredible. Two days before, he had been abusive and violent on the phone. Now he's sounding like he's my best friend. *But he never mentioned any specific deal or offer.* He didn't tell me he was involved with Kay Graham and the *Washington Post* in any way. He never said the *Post* was about to make an offer to buy my shares. I hung up and called Tufo. I was perplexed. I asked him what was going on with Felker. He didn't know any more than I did."

Felker's recollection: "It was a friendly phone call. There was no question in my mind that he had accepted my offer."

Burden's response: "What offer? I didn't even know the *Washington Post* was in on the deal until the following day when I got a phone call from Tufo. He told me he would be seeing Felix Rohatyn, who represented the interests of the *Post*, on Friday, the 31st."

December 30: A series of phone calls. Burden: "Tufo spoke to Felix that night and Felix said the *Washington Post*'s offer would involve dissolving NYM Inc. and making it a division of *Newsweek*. There would be no continuing role for me on the board. NYM Inc. would cease to be an independent company. I called Murdoch. He said, 'Felker is no friend of yours. Did you know he was up all of last night negotiating a new contract for himself with the *Washington Post*?' There it was. Clay and his contract. So I called Clay and said, 'Look, you've said for 18 months you wanted control, and now you're selling out the whole company to go to work for the *Washington Post*. This wasn't what I

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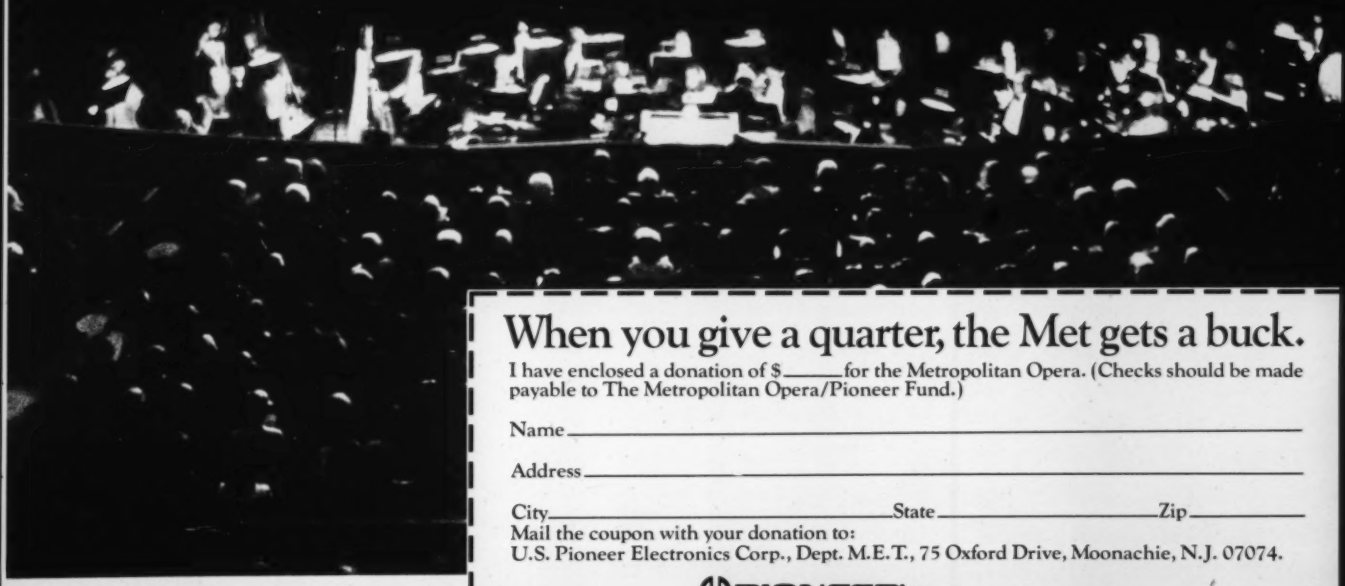

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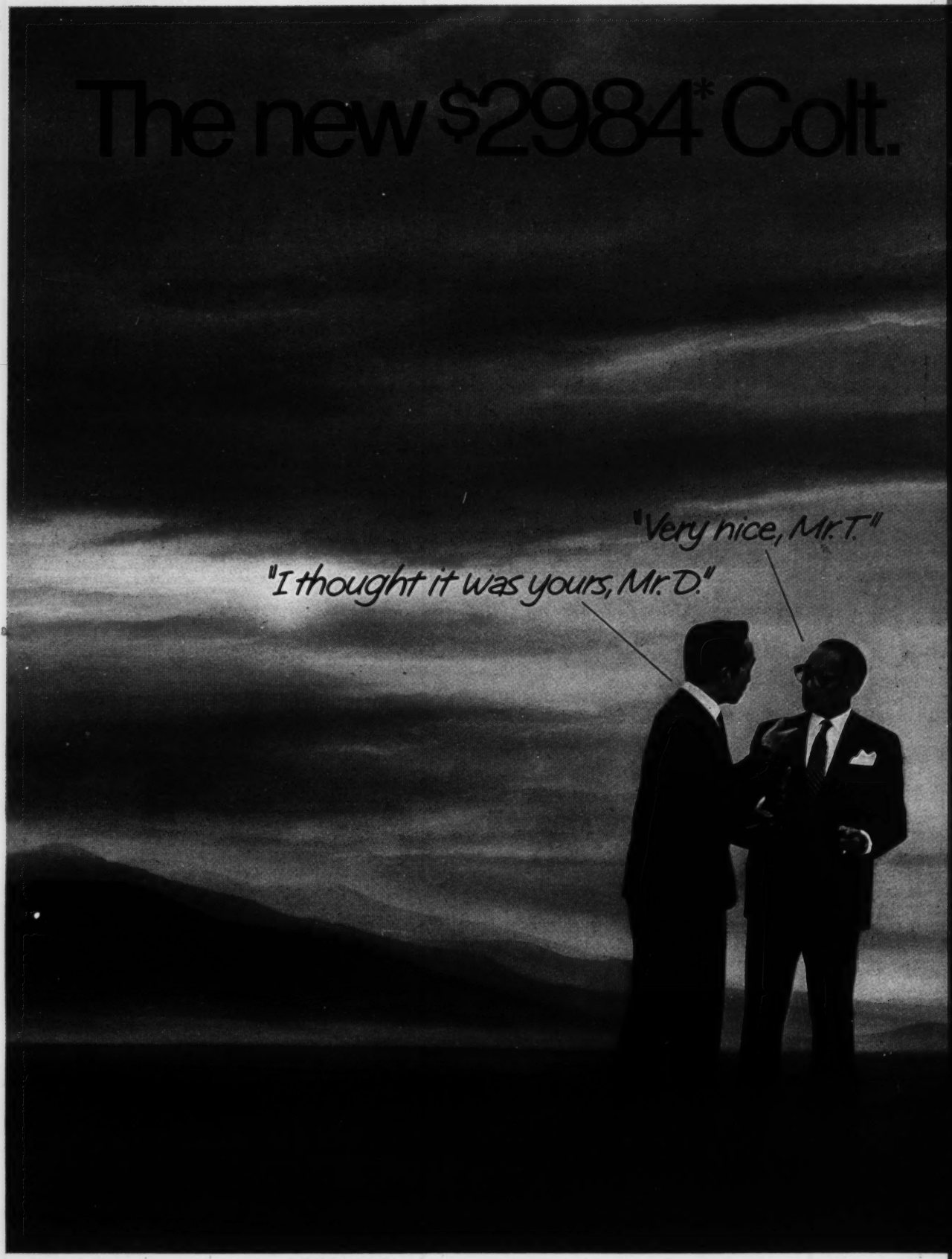

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PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT HEISER

Robert Towbin: **"Power, the thing that obsessed Clay, he never really understood. Strange to say, he never understood the power of the written word. When he walked into his office and saw all those people laboring away in their little cubicles, now that was power to Clay"**

had in mind at all.'

"He started screaming. [Burden reads from the affidavit.] 'You have to accept the *Washington Post* offer tomorrow!' he said. 'If you don't accept the *Washington Post* offer, there will be no magazines left to sell! I'm going to go to court to stop you! I'm going to turn the entire New York journalistic community against you!' I told him if he continued to threaten me, I'd sell to anybody but him. I hung up. The irony here is that at that point I hadn't really made up my mind. I called Tufo and told him to call off the meeting the next day with Felix."

December 31: Rohatyn strides into Tufo's office and bids $7.50 for Burden's stock on behalf of the *Washington Post*. Within minutes, Tufo calls Murdoch and Murdoch betters the offer. As far as Burden is concerned, the *Washington Post* is finished.

Informed that Murdoch has bettered the *Post*'s offer, Felker goes searching for somebody to come into the deal with megabucks and stay in. He places a transatlantic call to Sir James Goldsmith (aka Jimmy Goldsmith), a brash, ultraconservative London financier who is looking into publishing. Felker knew Goldsmith through David Frost and Felix Rohatyn.

But in Jimmy Goldsmith, Felker had a problem. Goldsmith was too far right. The Britisher had filed more than 100 writs of libel in 12 months—said to be an English record—against *Private Eye*, the satirical London biweekly. He'd also filed a criminal libel suit against the *Eye* editor. The analogy is not perfect, but to the extent that *Private Eye* is a muckraking, scandal-mongering tabloid, it is to London what the *Voice* is to New York. Asked why he had turned to Goldsmith, a man he knew would trouble his liberal writers, Felker said quickly, "He would have gone to $8.50 a share; he might have gone to $9. I was scrambling, that's all."

January 1, 1977: Felker obtains a temporary restraining order (TRO) in Federal District Court, barring the sale of Burden's stock to Murdoch pending the outcome of whatever legal battle he can mount. The issues are complicated, but they boil down to this: Felker had a stockholders agreement with Burden giving him the rights of first refusal over Burden's stock, should Burden want to sell it. At midnight on December 31, the fourth quarter of 1976 ended. NYM Inc. had lost money for four quarters in a row. According to the stockholders agreement, this nullified the rights of first refusal held by Felker over Burden's stock. According to Felker, the agreement was null and void due to the enormous start-up costs attributed to *New West*. However, there is nothing in the stockholders agreement excluding start-up costs of new ventures from determining losses over a four-quarter period. Felker's case is described by many as "weak," but it is strong enough to convince the court to issue a TRO.

The same day, Tufo, Shuman and Murdoch fly to Sun Valley. Upon landing, they are informed that the TRO has been issued. However, none of the principals has actually been served with the order by the court. They decide to go ahead and make a deal with Burden that would become effective pending the outcome of the court case.

At 9 p.m., over a table in a Sun Valley restaurant, Murdoch and Burden sign papers transferring the Burden shares, pending the outcome of the court situation. Murdoch signs a check for $3.5 million and passes it to Burden.

"Let me see it," says Susan Thompson, Burden's "frequent companion." "I've never seen $3.5 million before."

January 2: By the evening of this Sunday, Rupert Murdoch either owns outright or has signed documents giving him control of 51 percent of NYM Inc. stock. "We didn't have to go after them [the other stockholders]; they came to us. Every single one of them wanted to sell. Not one of them was going to stand by Clay," Stanley Shuman recalls.

That night Murdoch phones Kay Graham, informing her that he now controls NYM Inc.

"We'd kept up a warm but occasional friendship over the years," Murdoch recalls. "Once she gave a dinner for me and invited Henry Kissinger. Another time I visited her at her country home, and Felker was there. It was Clay-said-this and Clay-said-that. Every time Clay would suggest something, she'd pick up the phone and call [Ben] Bradlee, or one of her executives at the *Washington Post*, and relay the suggestion. You could almost *feel* the hostility coming back over the line.

"Anyway, when I told her, she was very, very emotional: 'I wanted to buy it [NYM Inc.] for my Clay,' she kept saying. 'You've taken it away from my Clay. You're going to ruin his life's work. All the writers will leave.' She was sobbing. I'd rung to make peace, to tell her I hoped our friendship could survive. She wasn't abusive, but I could hardly believe how emotional she was."

The same evening, Towbin also called Graham to tell her he was selling his stock to Murdoch. (Towbin's 1.5 percent put Murdoch over the top.) "She was crying, and all she could talk about was how we were ruining 'her Clay.' The only thing I could conclude was that the woman was in love with Felker. There's really no other way to explain it."

Shuman: "She [Kay Graham] had been willing to go to $7.50, maybe higher in the bidding, but all her advisers were against it. Felker was making the same

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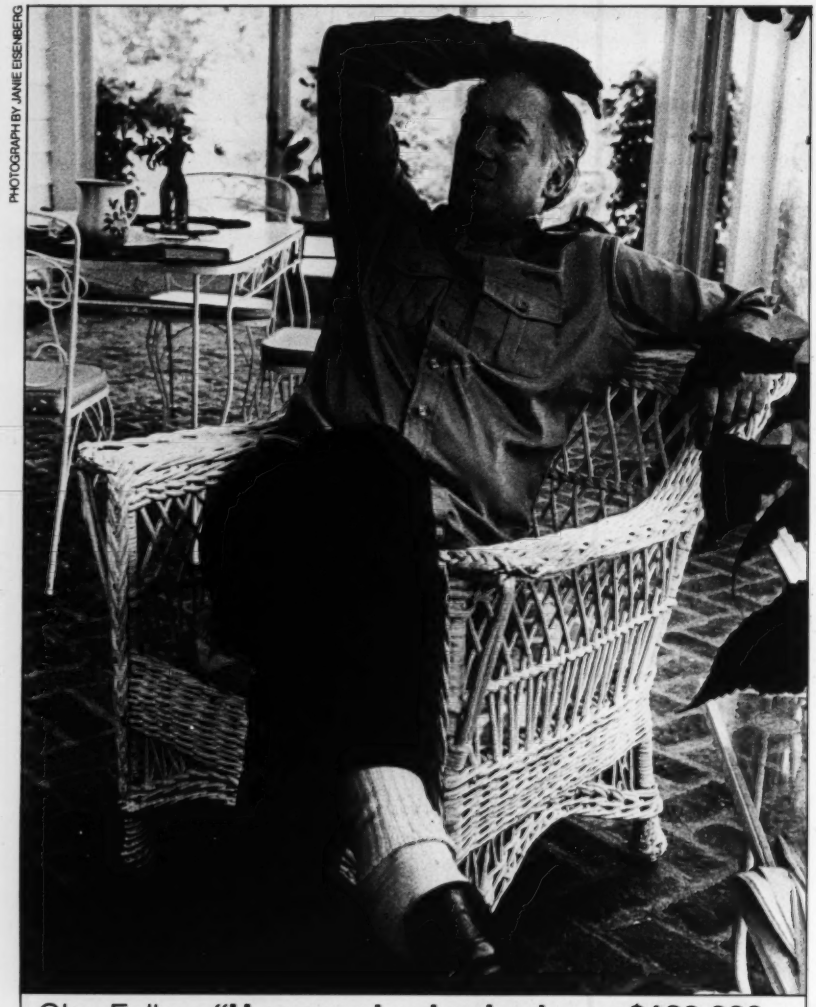

Clay Felker: **"How was I going broke on $120,000 a year? I've always been in the 50 percent tax bracket, so that means I'm living on $60,000. And I never got a bonus. *Never*. I've been living in the same apartment for 14 years. I never had enough money to get into the tax shelters the rest of the board had. . . ."**

contractual demands on the *Washington Post* that had alienated his own board of directors."

January 3: After a tumultuous board meeting, during which Murdoch and Shuman are installed, Felker retreats to the offices of *New York*. There, he finds the support so lacking on his own board.

January 4: The staff of *New York* issues a press release denouncing Murdoch on "moral" grounds, supporting Felker and threatening to walk out if Murdoch takes over. Principal spokesmen are Richard Reeves and Ken Auletta, Felker's chief political writers. But neither Reeves nor Auletta bothers to check that Felker had, only a month before, been actively negotiating with Murdoch in the fruitless attempt to sell *New York* and the *Voice* in return for a major share of *New West*. Nor do the *New York* staffers bother to inform themselves of the Jimmy Goldsmith connection.

Shuman: "The irony of him hiding behind his writers during the fight that first week in January, when he'd already cut their balls off—it's just too much."

January 6: The staff of *New York* magazine stages a work stoppage, a walk-out in support of Felker. That afternoon, Felker and Glaser go to the offices of the magazine, look around, and announce that it is impossible to put the magazine out.

At the same time, lawyers for Murdoch are in court. They report to the judge that Felker has refused to meet with Murdoch, as he had been urged to do earlier in the week, when the TRO was issued. The judge, who on Saturday issued the order barring sale of Burden's stock to Murdoch, now apparently realizes that Felker is simply using the federal court as a delaying tactic to maneuver. He orders Felker to meet with Murdoch to see if they can reach an agreement.

January 7: At 4:30 a.m., Friday, about the time Bartle Bull was pasting up the last house-ad to fill the last hole in a very peculiar issue of *New York*, the deal went down. That afternoon, the court lifted the TRO, thus completing the sale of Burden's stock to Murdoch. Felker sold his 10 percent of the company to Murdoch at $7.50 per share, netting $1.2 million. *New York* magazine and Clay S. Felker were no longer synonymous. Loyalists who left the magazine with him, and who stayed behind to answer the phone while he vacationed for 10 days in the French West Indies, answered his home phone with the words: "Clay Felker's office." It truly was the end of an era.

Shuman: "Clay's position right to the end was: 'I can't make a deal with you because the writers will consider that I sold them out. You either go away, or I'll litigate.' The truth was, he sold them out a long time ago. The amazing part of it is that he really believed what he was saying. It was a kind of tragic madness."

Murdoch: "What Clay never realized was the simple fact that there are ways to deal with a board of directors. He could have had them to lunch twice a year at the offices of *New York* with the governor or Teddy Kennedy or somebody. He could have flown them all to the West Coast for the founding of *New West*, given them a dinner at the Beverly Wilshire, introduced them as 'my colleagues and friends.' With a few simple moves, he could have kept them happy. Instead, he made enemies of them, one by one. They were all threats to his authority. He was afraid of them."

Felker, over scrambled eggs and vegetable soup at Stark's on Madison Avenue: "These guys have been lying about me for years. I'm going to defend myself the only way I can—legally. They're lying to cover up a dishonorable act. I'll sue for libel. I'll sue anybody who tells a lie about me. It's the only recourse I have left. I'll sue. . . ." ●

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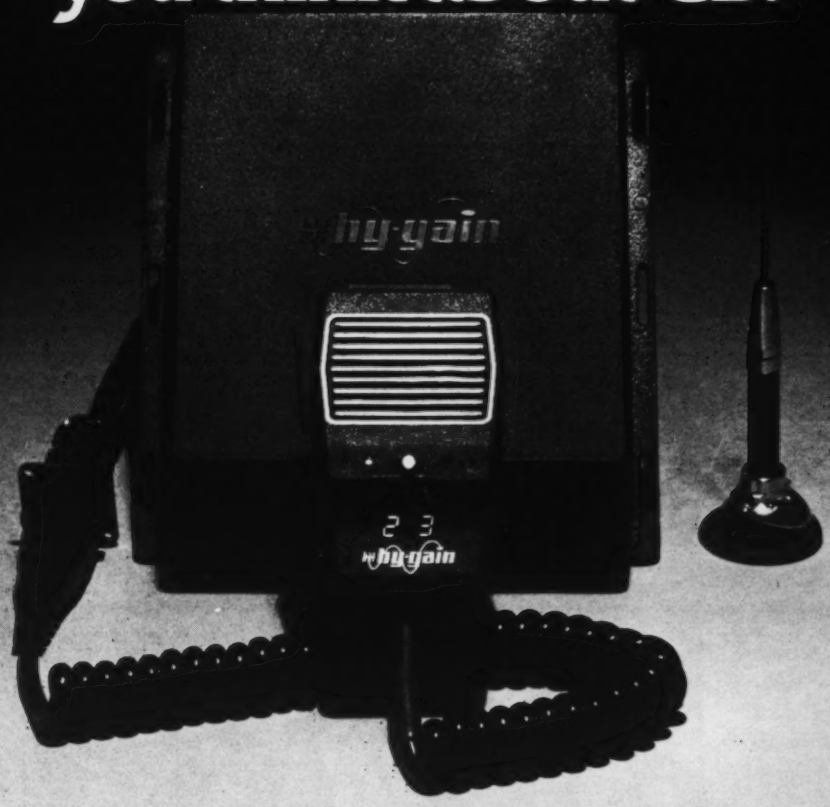

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THE MT. KISCO Sting

How the good guys dreamed they won (and finally did)

by Robert Ward

Imagine this: a 1940's movie, directed by Frank Capra, starring Jimmy Stewart, Spencer Tracy, Edward Arnold and Akim Tamiroff. The plot involves an international gang of gunrunners who descend on a sleepy town called Mt. Kisco. This gang happens to run into a guy named Vinnie, whom they assume to be a mafioso. Vinnie tells the gang he has a friend named Tony. Vinnie hints that if the gun boys think he's a hard case, they ought to meet Mr. Big himself, Tony Stagg. The gunrunners are an oily crew who have sold illegal arms to the Arabs, the Israelis, the Greeks, the Serbs and the Curds. . . . Soon the arms merchants are meeting regularly with Big Tony, Vinnie and other "mobsters" at a Mt. Kisco restaurant. A deal is arranged, which includes the U.S. State Department, Guatemala, the military commander of El Salvador and 30 million smackolas worth of illegal rods. The day for the big transaction is set. The gunrunners are drooling . . . But lo and behold, the "mob" they met, the mob that seemed to control Mt. Kisco, is not a mob at all! What the baddies are up against is a clever assemblage of local yokel police, a couple of feds and the brilliant acting of some guys who arent't even police, but just wanted to help out. The town is completely ordinary.

The slickers from the big cities and south of the border have been hoodwinked by good old American Small Town Togetherness and Know-How . . . Sound ridiculous? Don't we know that nobody helps the police? That small suburban towns are mere pits of alienation, alcoholism and adultery? Too corny—even for Frank Capra?

The trouble is, the above is no fantasy. What we have here is a true tale, which took place only last March in Mt. Kisco, N. Y., an ethnic suburb of Manhattan.

Mt. Kisco locals were led by an undercover cop buff named Tony Stagg. Stagg is a huge, derigible-shaped man in his forties whose consciousness has been fried by gangster movies and TV crime series. With police chief William J. Nelligan and U.S. Attorney Robert Fiske, Stagg was primarily responsible for the convictions of seven defendants in one of the biggest illegal arms sale cases in U.S. history. He completely conned the arms merchants, a weird assemblage of tatty businessmen, crazed Latins and terminal bumblers, whose own imaginations were as media-maimed as his own, into believing he was a kingpin mafia don who was going to introduce them to Big-Time American crime.

***Capice?* Tony "Bear" Stagg had no problem donning the role of mafia kingpin. He was a big *Baretta* fan. *Kojak* too.**

Tony "Big Bear" Stagg sticks his derringer into his neat little holster, which is in one of his cowboy boots. It's tough getting down there below his stomach, which has ballooned up even larger of late, and the sweat runs off his shiny forehead. Still, he manages gracefully. Like Sidney Greenstreet's, his fatness is imperial, swaying regally as he cruises a room, pops his gum, swivels his head, checking out the turf. The gun clips in with an authoritative snap that makes Tony smile. His smile is cockeyed, ambivalent, warm yet utterly distant; his teeth and eyes shine promises at once charming and dangerous.

"Hey," says Tony, "you like these boots? I got these boots for the Bicentennial, baby. You see, 1776. Nice, huh?"

Nice indeed. Blue leather and white stars and the American Eagle looking up at you like Marlon Brando in *Julius Caesar.* Tony is wearing a western jacket and safari hat. His Volkswagen, wild in the streets, features giant eagles on the front framed by huge white numbers against a blue backdrop: 1776-1976.

"This is where it all went down," Stagg says, cruising through Mt. Kisco with a proprietary air. "You know what dey say when they talk about Mt. Kisco? They say, 'Hey, nothing ever happens here.' But it did, you see. It did happen, Gabish?"

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES GATEWOOD

Next to us, a red-faced kid with blond hair and an L.L. Bean jacket is straddling a BMW. He looks like he is in no hurry, may remain at the light indefinitely.

Tony looks him over.

"Stoned. Stoned out of his mind. I can spot'em, baby. If I was still around we'd have his ass in the can in a month. We done a lot of cases, baby. They say nothing ever happens here. Yeah, right."

Listening to Tony, one has an uneasy sense of déjà vu. *Baretta, Kojak, The French Connection*. He has invented himself, assumed a crazy quilt of All-American Tube gestures, voice inflections, habits. He admits it: "That's it, man. I study those shows. That's how I got to be the kind of cop I am. It's how I put it over on those gun dudes."

Somehow, this all seems right. Mt. Kisco is a familiar place, and after a bit, it makes you feel uneasy, too. Republican. Population, 9000. Home of such talk show entities as Arlene Francis and Robert Goulet. The perfect place to retire. . .

Stagg landed in Mt. Kisco after a period of wandering. He'd flunked as a police candidate (the great disappointment of his life); made a half-hearted attempt at the construction business; and finally became a bodyguard to various pop singers as a means of compensating for his lost police career. One of them, Rudy Isley of the Isley Brothers, owned a club in Mt. Kisco. Tony had a look at the town, liked all the Italian-Americans he saw, and settled in . . .

Soon he'd made himself the premiere "character" in town, had befriended the local cops and was helping them with small busts, dope entrapments, etc. He could fullfill his fantasy world, one which craved action, adventure, danger, and at the same time, be on the right side of the law.

"You know the Bear," Stagg says, pulling into the Northern Westchester Health Club. "The Bear hates crime. He hates dope. He hates punks with guns. Me, I'm an American. A government man all the way."

Which, in some ways, makes Tony the perfect citizen of Mt. Kisco, which is itself a victim of TV ennui. Stagg seems to be a man who lives by myth, by code, in a theater of the self that inexorably draws people in. Gunrunners, cops and bored businessmen were all too "American" to resist.

The Beginning of the Case

"I was a flashy dresser and my last name was Coppola," Vinnie Coppola, one of Tony's prime actors in the Mt. Kisco Sting, says. "A lot of people thought I was related to the mafia don in New York, 'Trigger' Mike Coppola. I never denied it, though I never said I was either. But occasionally people would mention something about my 'Family,' and I'd just nod, or play along with them. Jim Grey was convinced I was a mafia hood. I didn't discourage him."

Jim Grey was himself a frustrated salesman. A small man, bored with his dull job, he had fallen into a relationship with Bob Michaelson, of Wittington Investments, Ltd. Michaelson, a fat man with connections in the South American coffee and hemp trades, a successful businessman who was dying to do something illicit and glamorous, one day told Jim Grey he had a list of guns that he wanted to get into the "right hands." Grey took a look at the list, and his brain reeled. This was it. Big Time. Gunsville. Hoodland. *Mean Streets. Serpico.* Excited as the Road Runner, Grey called Vinnie Coppola, whom he'd known and admired since high school, and told him he had something that might interest the Family, if Vinnie knew what he meant. Hanging up, Grey felt terrific. Things were moving.

The Midget was caught, entering TV Cop World. Guns were only the beginning. There'd be no stopping them, if they made the Big Connection with American Crime

Vinnie met Grey at Kennedy Airport, and received a list from him. Oh, Foreign Intrigue! Coppola put on his dark glasses to look at the list. It was hard to believe. The ultimate Movie Scenario Dream List. Oozzie Machine Gun, M-26, 1A hand grenade, .9 mm Sten Gun, bazooka (bazookas in Mt. Kisco! Crazed killers hitting the Dairy Queen, ski masks on: "Give it to us now, Red! Three triple snow cones with sprinkles or we'll blow your ass off!. . ."), M-79 grenade launchers, .38 caliber pistols. Rockets, tanks, tanks for Chrissake—what are we gonna do—blast the Weight Watchers? Coppola was so excited he felt like hijacking a 747. . .

Cut to Mt. Kisco. Tony Big Bear is handling the list. He turns it over and over. This is weird shit . . . this ain't Johnny-Too-Late-for-the-Revolution popping reds and speed and trying to get off on Black Sabbath at Stepinac High School. This ain't the track coach who decides to dynamite his wife's Tupperware party so he can run free over the hurdles of life . . . this here is Trouble. Across the desk is Chief Nelligan, who looks like George C. Scott. The jutting jaw, the lines on the face from too many years of meeting his private friend, Johnny Walker, but now Nelligan is caught up too . . . not so much as the others, for he has savvy, but he can feel the Big Wave, the Big Case fever . . . Should they do it as they had before, using the Organized Crime routine? Should they risk it all by themselves, keep the case away from the fucking FBI who always try to hone in and grab all the credit? . . .

"So what we do," Chief Nelligan says, fingering the sign on his desk that says THE BUCK STOPS HERE, "we get in the ATF [Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, a small, easy-to-handle federal bureau], get Joe Kelly, who is a good man, works well with Tony, then we set up the scam . . . Tony is the Kingpin; Bobby Cercena [a Mt. Kisco detective] plays his adopted brother; Joe Kelly plays a gun expert recently brought into The Family." The other Mt.Kisco cops, men like Ralph Hyatt, Big Jerry and the only black on the force, Duke McKenzie, would play supporting roles. The invisible figure is Poppa, Tony's old man, who lived in Vegas.

"The reason for Poppa," says Tony now, "was if we needed a time lag. We got to check with Poppa first. That gave us a day to figure out strategy."

Of course, the ruse wouldn't work with just the cops. If the gun people really were big-time, they would have to see palpable evidence of Tony's power . . . They would have to see snapped fingers and doors opening. They would have to see big shiny limos that moved through the frosty air like mechanical panthers, ready to pounce on the small-time dude who failed to show Tony "respect." In short, if this episode of hometown *Baretta* was to get the right ratings with the crooks, then there would have to be a real set. To do this, the townspeople, the people who owned and controlled Mt. Kisco, would be crucial.

Nelligan never questioned *why* the gunrunners thought they could unload heavy artillery on the Mt. Kisco branch of the mob. Criminals, in his experience, were crazy.

So Tony fell by the local Caddy dealer, Martabano Motors, grabbed Marty Martabano and said, "Hey Marty, you done us a little favor before, lending us the cars when we needed them to im-

Good guys' guise: Chief Nelligan (left) provided Stagg with his "mob," casting Detective Cercena as Stagg's younger brother and others as his "bodyguards "

press that asshole who had the dope. Well we need a couple of limos again." And, because things were a little slow, Marty was only too happy to get in on the action.

So was Frank D'Allura,owner of the Northern Westchester Health Club and the Pepper Tree Restaurant & Lounge . . . "Hey listen Tony, you come in here and you got the run of the place. No problem. You wanna a little Chicken Franchese, you got it. No problem, Tony. You and Bobby. You want to act like the owner, then, hey, you are the owner. Gabish?" Glenn Modlin of the Holiday Inn helped, and so, eventually, did half of Mt. Kisco.

The First Meeting—March 21

Ten o'clock in the morning. Joe Kelly was outside of the Pepper Tree, wiring himself for sound. Kelly watched as Tony sat down inside. Almost eerie working with that guy. Nobody knew enough about the crazy bastard. Tony himself had been busted in some kind of bizarre federal insurance case. Kelly knew, but had gotten off with one day's probation. The best goddamned undercover cop in the world. In a class with Serpico. But who was he? So many voices coming at you at once. So many gestures. Eerie.

Earlier that morning Stagg had gotten them prepped: "We ain't no faggots baby, but we will all be holding daisies if we make a mistake."

A little weird being led around by a guy like this. But he was good. Maybe the best. But still . . .

In truth, Kelly wasn't the only one who had doubts about Stagg. So many "buts." Strange displacements of personality. People felt like they were being taken over by Tony. He was so—weird. He looked like a Don Martin character, some mad prince who kills pigeons in the park. He often wore a little bolero coat that came only to his waist; a huge belt buckle, real jade and silver, sticking out like knuckles on a giant fist. And dark, plum-tinted glasses, so you could never see his eyes. The glasses swept back greasy strands of hair, combed straight. A fat Valentino. Sometimes you wanted to chuckle at the guy . . . only . . . only . . . you didn't.

Not that any of this bothered Stagg. He went about his business like a howitzer, blasting his way through a thicket of complaints and doubts. While the rest of the cast waited for the show to begin, Stagg would be thinking "tactics."

"Bobby," he would say in a hoarse, New York hood rasp, "you know . . . it might be good to break some ashtrays. You know da bit . . ."

And Cercena would comply.

The broken ashtray ploy was something Stagg had picked up from *Baretta* . . . One night on *Baretta*, Stagg saw a hoodlum look down at his table, notice an ashtray with a crack in it and throw the object across the room, smashing some whiskey bottles behind the bar. Well, he wouldn't do anything that dramatic. He would just quietly look down, and stare regretfully at the ashtray as if he, in his magnificence and regal mafia splendor, had been slightly offended, ticked off ever-so-minutely, nothing for anyone to get real upset about. Only don't ever let it happen again! Show the don some respect!! Gabish?

"Hey, Bobby," he would say, shaking his huge, dark head slowly. "Hey, Bobby, you see dis ashtray? You see it, baby? Well, don't let me see it like dis no more, you unnerstan? I don't like broken tings, you see? You start traveling with broken tings, pretty soon you got broken people . . . when you got broken people, you are nowhere, you see?"

Stagg would deliver this speech slowly and mournfully, with so much

threat in it that whoever the mark was, whatever his questions as to Stagg's legitimacy were, he would soon be overwhelmed. What use were questions in the face of Mister Big?

On the afternoon of March 21, at lunch, Stagg, Kelly and Vinnie met a fat man with many chins. Michaelson. They hated him immediately. Michaelson's small grayish eyes stuck out of his face like peas in a frozen Swanson meat pie. He was dressed in an expensive dark suit with food stains on it. He was a slob, yet not without intelligence. Wittington Investments gave him over $100,000 a year. "But," he said, "I like to live high. I like to live on the money. After taxes, there's never enough . . ." And so he had met some people in Guatemala, and they knew some people in Spain, and they knew some people, nice people, who owned a casino in Greece, and all of them knew very nice people in Chile . . . Michaelson paused: "I understand you people are interested in some guns?"

Stagg came on warily. *Maybe* he was interested. He would have to see another, fuller list. Michaelson had brought the list, and when he showed it to Stagg, Kelly, Cercena and Vinnie, they all felt the same electric shock. This was for real now. Michaelson was talking howitzers . . . But Tony never flinched. "What the hell," Tony asked grumpily, "*is* an M-79, exactly?" Bobby and Vinnie almost cracked up. Michaelson quickly said he himself wasn't sure what M-79's were, but his people, all very professional, good people . . . *they knew* . . . because they'd "sold guns to both Israel and Egypt . . . you could see 'em right on TV at night . . ."

Tony said nothing. He just stared at Michaelson through his black glasses. Michaelson began to sweat. Maybe he should have stuck with the illegal coffee shipments . . . ha ha . . . this was a bit much . . . this big, bald guy . . . At one point, while Michaelson was trying to listen to Kelly, Tony said in his gruffest voice, "Hey, are you *really interested?*" And Michaelson, in his high-pitched falsetto, said, "Sure, why?" And Tony looked down sadly at his feet, as if thinking this hurts me a lot more than it hurts you. Now Michaelson was starting to sweat a little more. "What in the hell have I done to offend this guy?" Then Tony said, softly, like a snowflake falling on a dying child's head, "You was looking the other way when I asked you a quesh-on; so I asked you again, but you was looking the other way again, you know?". And Michaelson can't say anything. But he is thinking. His brain is sending out alert signals: "Got to get this deal through, and split. This guy isn't kidding." He looks at Tony and says weakly, "I'm sorry." And right there, Tony knew he'd gotten his claws in good.

The Next Meetings

During the following weeks, Tony, Vinnie and Bobby Cercena lived like functional schizophrenics.

"Not only did I have to be Tony's partner, ready to roll at any time, but I was also investigating burglaries in town here," recalls Cercena. "So one minute I'd be in court testifying about a robbery case, and a second later one of the gunrunners would show up unexpected and I would get a call from Tony, or someone else on the case. 'Get up here fast . . . bring a Cadillac.' "

And Bobby, dour-faced, heavyset Bobby, who likes to say, "I'm the happiest guy in the world, I just never smile," Bobby would wheel up to Marty Martabano, ask for another Caddy limo, and Martabano would deliver. Only, truth to tell, Marty was starting to get a trifle worried. The lid was starting to come off just a little . . . like the time he was down at the Dairy Queen with his wife and he looks up and there's this strange black limo sitting next to his. *And then he realizes it's not his limo!* Inside are these heavy-looking dudes with big-business suits, and these are definitely not, no way, Mt. Kisco boys . . . These guys were big-time, for sure, and Martabano's wife is getting a little jittery . . . like maybe the death threats will come in and there will be a horse's head sitting on her bed some night. Marty thinks this is bullshit, the *Godfather* isn't *real*, and it wasn't that he didn't have confidence in the boys, these are good boys . . . but . . . good *local* cops, see. What if they are dealing with heavy heavies, not just your average light heavy gun nut, what if it's like the show he saw on *Kojak*, where the guy helps the police and finds his wife tied with a cord and plugged into the place where the waffle iron usually goes? Stuff like that went through his mind. At times, because of his wife you understand, he thought about taking a gracious bow out. It crossed his mind . . . but then Bobby would come around and say, "Hey, remember back at grade school, the time we had Lucille Funguzi, and . . . bip bop bam . . ." The upshot would be Bobby would drive out with yet another Caddy limo, and Marty would go home and try to explain to his wife that "after all, the boys had the situation in hand." But at night, Lord at night, after the *Kojak* reruns, he would sit up in bed and do a couple of quick Hail Marys just for insurance . . .

"You want this money?" Tony screamed. "You got it! Here!" It was a huge gamble, but it worked. The gun merchants fondled the money, then put it back. The Mt. Kisco Gang was OK

Certainly the boys who showed up at the Pepper Tree during the next few weeks were heavies . . . They were heavies in the sense that they had done deals in the past, they had access to huge shipments of burp guns and C.130 attack planes, all weird shit like that, yet, everything about them seemed . . . well, *light* instead of heavy. In fact, there was a definite buffoonish aspect to them that Stagg and his friends hadn't anticipated. Take Raymond Geraldo, The Midget, for example. Geraldo is about five-three, slightly porky, with a friendly teddy bear quality. It was hard to imagine him as the Merchant of Death. On *Kojak* or *Police Story*, a guy in his role would have 45 inches of acne scars, Lee Van Cleef eyes and a voice from the Big Gravel Pit. Geraldo, however, had a pleasant, soft voice. Instead of wanting to put him in the Big House, Bobby Cercena began to feel he was a pal . . . They were all in a game together . . . The game of cops 'n robbers . . . Even Tony, who "hates punks and scumbags," had to admit feeling sort of mellow about Raymond: "The boy had charm." Indeed, he should have, for his background was not poor-boy-from-slums-goes-bad-number. Actually, the Midget's father was an American military man who had acted as an adviser in Guatemala. Geraldo had grown up there in a fine house, and through his family had "made many friends among the generals from South American countries." He'd learned that the ways to power and money were many and varied, but all had one constant—the United States. The good old U.S. could be counted on in various ways to support its "friendly neighbors." He told Tony these facts in quiet, lovable syllables, and Tony, warming to the lad's story, told him about Poppa. While the theme song from the *Godfather* played on the jukebox, Tony movingly recited the Poppa Story: "Poppa

Grand illusion: This was Gunsville, baby, and by the Sting's end, half of Mt. Kisco was involved. Frank D'Allura lent his Pepper Tree Lounge as base of operations (top), and car dealer Marty Martabano (bottom) came up with the requisite limos

lives in Vegas. You ain't ever gonna see him, but he is waiting, watching. He has heard good things about you. He knows you are right."

As for the shipment of the guns, itself, Geraldo was not to worry, for,as Tony put it, "Poppa owns the Westchester County airport, you unnerstan' what I'm telling you?"

The Midget smiled, his brown eyes flashed. He was caught, wired in, entering TV Cop World. He thought of what he would tell his friend, Miguel Celis, his buddy in El Salvador's Department of the Exterior. Here it was at last. Not merely a gun deal but an in to organized crime. There could be no stopping them if they made the Big Connection. The Midget was so happy he broke out in a rash. Guns were only the beginning. He said his friends controlled "Nomad missiles" that could wipe out entire cities. Tony kept his cool, smiled.

How Would You Like A South American Country?

The following day Geraldo showed up at the Pepper Tree Lounge with Dominick Cagianese of Dix Hills, Long Island, and Michaelson. Cagianese, a big man with a thick, blunt body and a worried expression, had been a beer-truck driver for 22 years, until he hurt his back. Now he worked for Mott Haven Truck Parts, in the Bronx, the place where Geraldo said some of the guns were stored. Cagianese was introduced as a gun expert. At this meeting everyone was happy. Tony was so happy, he played the *Godfather* theme ten times.

"I figured they was going for it," Tony says. "I'll lay it on. The whole Poppa bit had been taken from the *Godfather* anyway, including the adopted son . . . we use most stuff from television because it's already inside a criminal's brain."

But Cagianese, for all his working-class background, was a little cagier than terrified, greedy Michaelson. He asked a few preliminary questions, answered a few technical questions about the weapons, then smiled and wanted to know what the guns were going to be used for.

It was a bad moment. *Godfather* theme or no, what possible rationale could even a powerful mafia gang have for such items as C.130 attack planes? Negotiations at this point were for $2.8 million, with extensions up to the $3 million range if everything worked out. Still, the question was well put. What the hell did the mob want with what amounted to war weaponry? Tony smiled,

looked down at his cheese sandwich, then held it up.

"You see dis cheese," he said. "Everytime you see dis cheese, I want you should think of me. Gabish? I control cheese like you wouldn't believe." He laughed, a rare thing. Everybody looked expectant. "Maybe you hearda a place down south, I mean *way* down south . . . where there are some poppy fields . . . Maybe you hearda the trouble we have there . . ."

Amazingly, Cagianese and Michaelson (Geraldo, at this point, was already Tony's greatest fan) went for it. The skimpiest of explanations. A place down south. The trouble.

The reason they went for it was television. Things had already been filled in by Geraldo Rivera. A week before on Geraldo's show, the hipper-than-thou TV journalist had taken his audience "to the strange and wild borders of Durango, Mexico," where the poppy growers were being resisted by a new government that was trying to reform the heroin situation . . . Two ten-minute segments had emphasized the fact that the gangster forces were stocking up on weapons in order to fight the government boys. Cagianese, like millions of other Americans, had heard about the story, and put two and two together.

Subsequently, the talk became expansive in the extreme. Geraldo warmed up over a few drinks and the good food of the Pepper Tree. He was now offering Tony and the boys "houses in Guatemala. Over the sea. Beautiful places." He had enough friends in South American countries to "take over most of them," but he didn't have enough money yet to pull it off. Geraldo drank Cinzano and spoke of the value of tourism in his homeland:

"You know they are opening Guatemala up to tourism . . . there is no reason why you couldn't put up a few hotels there, with a few, uh, diversions . . . There's a lot of land there, and very, very friendly people."

Stagg nodded, ate his cheese, snapped his fingers, asked for *Stardust* on the juke box, countered with a joke:

"You know why they shaped Italy like a boot?"

"No."

"Because you can't stuff all that shit into a sneaker."

Shades of the *Godfather*. The gun boys roared.

The Feds Find Out

During the next few meetings Tony and Bobby and Kelly discovered that working with Michaelson was a Frank Alvarez, another Latin hustler. Alvarez and Cagianese had office space in the Mott Haven Truck Parts warehouse in the Bronx. At the warehouse were brochures, pictures and Alvarez himself, so Tony decided to pay the man a visit.

Things were set with the technical backup unit. Pictures and tapes of Tony and Alvarez together would be invaluable.

At first the scheme seemed to work perfectly. Tony, dressed in a hat with peacock feathers, his dark suit and wine-colored tie, went to Mott Haven and entertained Alvarez with tales of his youth, and checked out the arms brochures.

He was about to take Alvarez to lunch, so his men could take photos, when he received a phone call from the Westchester County D.A. The D.A. had no idea Stagg was working on the Mt. Kisco scam, and wanted to have Tony testify for him in another case. He'd called the Pepper Tree, and was told by an employee that Tony had left the number for Mott Haven Truck Parts. Tony, of course, had left the number for Bobby. Unfortunately, Frank Alvarez answered the phone and heard: "Assistant D.A. of Westchester County calling for Mr. Stagg." Alvarez, completely fooled by Tony's act, froze. Stagg, watching Alvarez, felt his entire body turn to ice. Now, more than ever, it was like a movie. When he was shot he would be like Fearless Fosdick, walking home with Swiss-cheese holes in his gut . . . Alvarez was looking at Tony strangely, but all he did was meekly hand him the phone and say, "It's the D.A. calling for you." But Tony just grabbed the phone and said, "Hey, baby, forget it! You can reach me if you can catch me, baby!" Both men stared at each other, while outside the trucks roared by.

"The D.A. is an asshole," Tony said. "He's trying to serve me with a subpoena. Can you imagine the idiot? He won't ever get elected again. He'll be on welfare. Gabish?"

"Gabish," Alvarez said.

The two men went outside. Tony hugged Frank Alvarez like a good Don should. Across the street, the Mt. Kisco cops took nice, clean pictures.

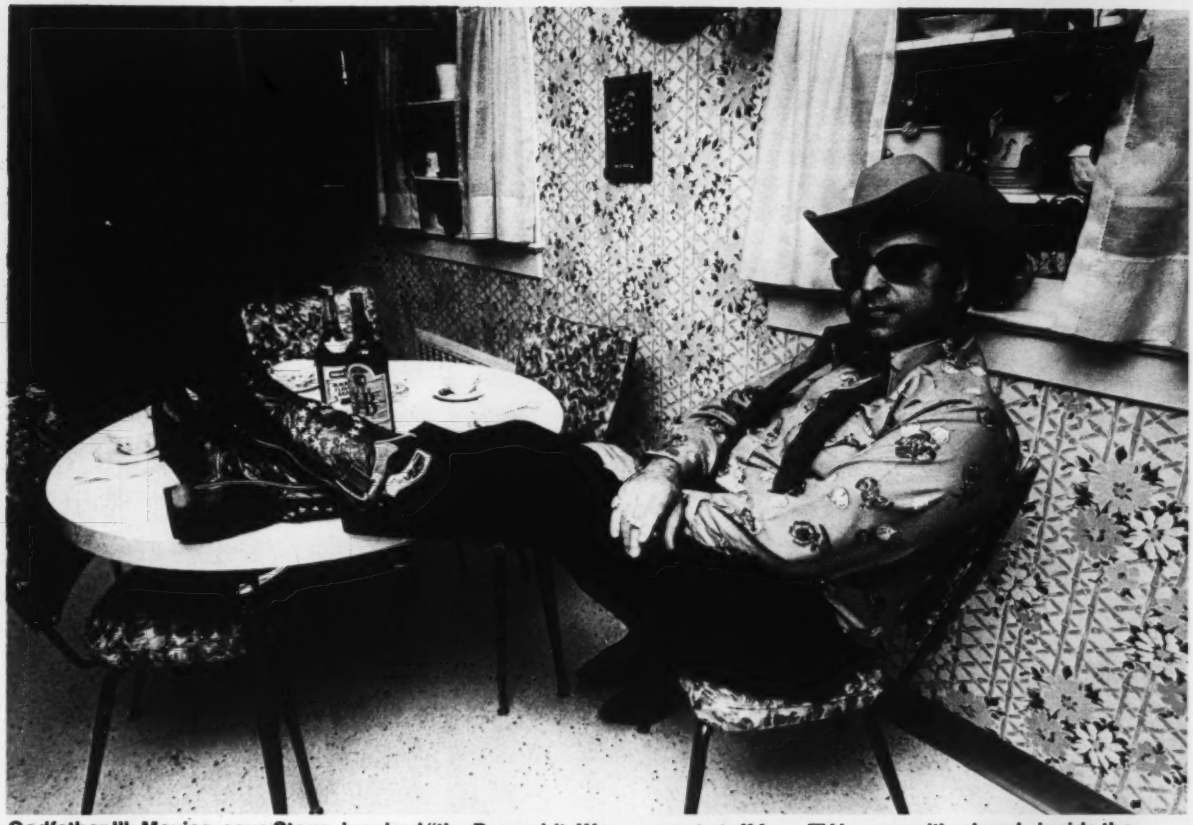
The End Use Certificate

Since Stagg's "underworld" had chosen to buy Bushmaster Automatic machine guns, weapons made in America, the only way they were able to buy them legally was to pretend the guns were being shipped out of the country, to a friendly nation. U.S. State Department policy does not permit a domestic group to purchase machine guns, but the States are more than happy to help some South American country that might be in the throes of a Communist takeover. And since many South American countries are in this state, it's only a matter of finding the right general in the right country. The South American general would sign a document called an end use certificate, a document issued by our State Department. "Once the friendly South American general has signed the paper," Geraldo explained, "it's simply a matter of putting 10,000 Bushmasters down as 'arms needed to defend our country against invasion.'" The guns would then be bought from the Bushmaster people in Vermont and shipped to the Mott Haven plant. Once there they could be taken out of their boxes and given to the "Mt. Kisco Mob."

So Geraldo went off with Tony Stagg's blessings. But not Bob Michaelson's. In fact, by this time Michaelson was beginning to sweat again. Here he was, flying to Guatemala and El Salvador, wining and dining people . . . and it was all on his own dough. This mafia don character, Tony Stagg, might be a big, bad-assed mother, but, truth be told, he had yet to put up one cent. They had talked millions of dollars, huge future deals involving Bell Cobras and Christ-knows-what, but the Mt. Kisco boys hadn't shown a cent. Perhaps they didn't have that much money. Perhaps they planned on waiting until the day the guns arrived, and then they were simply going to waste everybody. Stagg certainly looked capable of it. Now Michaelson began to worry for the safety of his family, for his own life. He *had* to see some money. He had to know there was a pot of gold.

Soon Geraldo was back, with wild stories. He had found a wonderful man named Montenegro. Montenegro had been willing to sign the end use certificate. They would all have liked Montenegro. A giant of a man. Unfortunately, he wasn't going to be able to help. Just a day before he was to meet Geraldo, on his way to a lavish lunch with some of his junta compadres, some careless revolutionaries had driven by and filled Montenegro full of holes.

But, said Geraldo, never fear. Where there is one Montenegro, there are many. All friendly to the U.S. Beautiful people. There is another wonderful man, a man called The Colonel. Colonel Manuel Alfonso Rodriguez, the military commander of the country of El Salvador. This wonderful man, said Geraldo, was an invaluable friend. He might be able to do not only this deal but many



Godfather III: Movies, says Stagg, inspired "the Poppa bit. We use most stuff from TV because it's already inside the criminal's brain "

others. The thing was, The Colonel's reasoning sounded a little off to Michaelson and the cooler heads. For example, if he signed an end use certificate asking for 10,000 machine guns for El Salvador, a country with only 5,000 people in the army, it might sound like he was getting one machine gun for each arm of every soldier. If, next year, he came back with another end use certificate for, say, a Bell Cobra with attack configuration rockets, it might look a little hairy to even the most jaded of the State Department boys. True, said Geraldo, but in that case we'll simply go to a bigger country. Chile is always good. But meanwhile, said Geraldo, The Colonel will do just fine, and he will only cost $75,000. No problem, Tony said. But Michaelson was definitely sweating now. He felt vague fear about everything. He began to pressure Tony. "We pay for all these expensive trips to South America. We even flew Joe Kelly down to South Carolina to shoot some guns. We've done everything, but we have yet to see any money." Tony tried his heaviest intimidation, but it was obvious the Mt. Kisco gang was going to have to come up with some bread. That night, after the gun boys left, Chief Nelligan appealed to the ATF to come up with $50,000.

"We simply assumed a government agency would have the money handy," he says now.

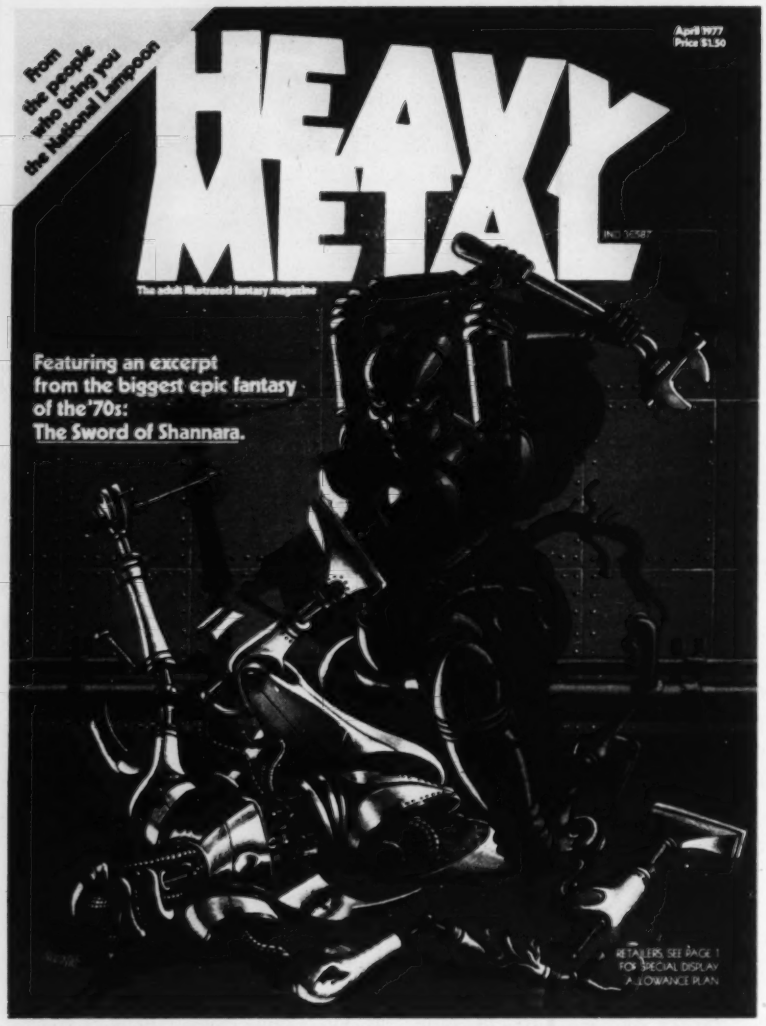
But the ATF is really a poverty-stricken little federal bureau. They couldn't come up with that kind of cash, so once again, the chief, Tony, Cercena and company had to improvise. First, they tried a local stationery store, Fox & Sutherland's, run by Kal Fox. In the past Fox had assisted the police by telling them who was buying small, glassine envelopes . . . the kind junkies use for heroin. Fox had to come up with 50 grand by six o'clock that night. The money had to be in cash, and he had to trust the police to use it, to bandy it about and impress the arms boys . . . and then pull it back before the bad guys could take any. It was a risky business, but, like Martabano, Fox came through with as much as he could, $35,000. That left Tony and the boys $15,000 short. Martabano might be good for it, but Richard Martabano, the elder partner, was out of town. His son couldn't make the transaction without dad's approval. Finally, the National Bank of Westchester, in conjunction with the Village of Mt. Kisco, agreed to loan the police the entire 50 grand. Now all Tony had to do was not blow it.

The next day's meeting was in the main office of the Northern Westchester Health Club. Tony, Vinnie, Cercena, Kelly and ATF agent Waxman were under the heaviest pressure they had yet seen. Michaelson, Alvarez and Cagianese were furious. They wanted to see money, they'd had it with talk. Yet the police couldn't possibly let them *take* the money . . . Tony went into his act, which was made somewhat easier by his 103-degree temperature. He had pneumonia.

He shouted for two hours. He stomped around the room. He slammed his fist and glowered. He tried every trick he knew. It was like orgasm. Finally, he opened the bottom drawer of a desk and pulled out all 50 grand. Making a grand gesture, he flung the money at the gun boys:

"You want to see money?" he said, screaming at Cagianese. "You want this money? You got it. Here."

He stood up, sweating and straining. The message was clear: If you take the money you have shown me great disrespect. Of course I'm good for it. I have always been good for it. Your doubting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me shows that you are without class. Without respect.

It was a huge gamble, but it worked. The gun merchants stared at the money, tantalized. They touched it and fondled it, and then finally placed it back on the desk and left the room. The Mt. Kisco Gang was OK in their books.

It was time to wind things up. The Big Payoff was scheduled for the Pepper Tree, then changed to the Holiday Inn. Tony had promised Michaelson and the others a "banquet you would never forget." He had promised them women . . . well, not exactly women—"escorts." The police got quite a kick out of that, but then Tony changed his mind. He didn't have much use for policewomen. In fact, he was dubious about broads generally. He once told Dominick Cagianese: "In the old days you give a broad ten bucks and a wagon and she gets to California. These days you give her a Cadillac and 50 grand and she can't get over the George Washington Bridge." Cagianese laughed loudly, but had a strange feeling that he'd heard the line before. Which he had. The joke had been from a Red Foxx party record. In the end there were no women in the Katonah Room at the Holiday Inn, and there was no banquet either. The police just set up fruit cups. Beautiful fruit cups in a sweet semicircle, which the gun boys were to admire, but never eat.

In addition to the banquet, Room 101 was set up for the Big Conference. And adjoining 101 the feds and the Mt. Kisco locals waited with their videotape equipment, ready to record the whole transaction for posterity. Unfortunately, the two groups were at this point not best buddies. As with any cop show, locals and feds were vying for control. Chief Nelligan was very anxious that his men be given full credit. He cited the fact that Tony Stagg had always worked with him in the past, and in effect was one of the force. The feds noted that, technically, Tony was on their payroll. Stagg, listening to all of this, felt a strange glow. He was no longer just an undercover cop. He was a Superstar.

After a hassle in the chief's office, during which the Mt. Kisco boys threatened not to go to the bust, peace was made. Paul Malagiero of the Mt. Kisco police went to Mott Haven to pick up Frank Alvarez. Michaelson drove himself to his funeral. Bobby Cercena went to Kennedy to pick up Geraldo and The Colonel, who'd flown in for the climax. Waiting by the gate, Cercena felt he was inside a cloud . . . When he arrived, The Colonel had a hole in his shoe. His toes stuck out absurdly—a large smiling man in a dark suit who was suffering from the gout.

One of the treats of the Payoff was to be the appearance of Poppa, and The Colonel and Geraldo were as excited about meeting him as they were about the deal. Poppa was the central fantasy . . .

As Cercena drove through Mt. Kisco, he pointed out the Catholic church, the old buildings and finally the police station. Inside, Chief Nelligan was as tight as a fist, but he couldn't resist walking out and looking as the car cruised by.

"Oh, look," Cercena said, turning to catch The Colonel's attention. "That's the chief of police." The Colonel answered in Spanish: "He must have very little to do in a small town like this." Everyone laughed heartily.

At the Holiday Inn, everyone gave The Bear the respectful hugs he had accustomed them to and then, after a brief drink and a look at the banquet room, Tony promised each of the men "escorts." "They'll be here after business," he said, winking broadly.

If this episode of hometown *Baretta* was to get the right ratings with the crooks, there would have to be a real set: bodyguards, hitmen, shiny limos, everything

Inside Room 101, the men talked about future plans. Carefully, the police asked The Colonel question after question. "You have ordered these guns?" The Colonel nodded his head and said, "Yes." Joe Kelly opened a briefcase, and took out $75,000. Tony looked at The Colonel. "He's getting $75,000, right?" Everybody nodded. The Colonel nodded too. Carefully, almost boringly, the police rehashed the details. On videotape, the scene plays slowly. Unlike *Kojak*, there is no real action at all, only meticulous attention to detail. But in scene after scene one can't help but notice that Stagg and the police look a little sorry that things are coming to an end, and the criminals look uncomfortable. No bragadoccio at all. "Let's get out of here with our lives," their eyes say. Finally, after handing over the money, Tony says, "Now I am going to get Poppa."

He opens the door and detective Ralph Hyatt of Mt. Kisco comes in. Tony hugs him and Hyatt pulls his gun and says, "Up against the wall, you are under arrest." Everything seems even slower, as in a dream. Michaelson, unlike movie criminals, does nothing. He is very still, a zombied spirit. He allows the cops to frisk him, sit him down, then cuff him. As Tony Stagg turns to go, there is no look of satisfaction on his face, just a dreamy stare. Then his face takes on a look of sorrow . . . as if he is afraid to leave the order of police work for the small terrors of everyday life. The last lines spoken on the tape are, "Handcuffs? Who the hell brought the handcuffs? Has anyone seen the cuffs? Somebody should have the cuffs."

And so the Mt. Kisco case closed. All of the defendants were convicted. Robert Michaelson was given five years for aiding and abetting a crime. The Midget, Raymond Geraldo, was given four years. Frank Alvarez got five. And The Colonel now resides in our prisons, serving two consecutive five-year sentences.

The Vortex of Synchronicity

A few months after the case was solved, the town of Mt. Kisco held a Mayor's Award Presentation. ABC-TV filmed Stagg and the concerned citizens and cops receiving gold medals. Stagg told his story to the nation, took calls from *60 Minutes*, chatted with national reporters.

In the next months there were rumors of death threats on Stagg's life. The threats were vague, but Tony was placed under the protective custody of federal marshals, and is now living somewhere in the West. In Mt. Kisco, sentiment runs to pathos. "Poor Tony. Look at what he did, and look at his reward. Uprooting his family, losing his home." Bobby Cercena: "Nothing much exciting happens now. We miss him. In a way, I guess we miss the case."

And now, the case is about to happen again. Paramount Pictures has bought rights to the story, and, if things go as expected, Stagg will be coming at the nation, full of juice, making the talk show circuits, hustling, improvising himself, creating from his own bizarre imagination a celluloid reality, which was itself inspired by Hollywood fantasies of the underworld. In short, Tony Stagg's natural progression from old-movie fan, to cop buff, to ace undercover agent is nearly complete. In another year—even if Gene Hackman plays him—Tony Stagg will have become a public myth, like Popeye Doyle. His fantasy, which was the gun hustlers' downfall and which changed the face of Mt. Kisco, is about to become a waking dream. ●

NEW TIMES FUTUR

The returns from the 1976 Future Events Contest are in, and this much seems clear: there is room all around for improvement. James P. Meyer of Neenah, Wis., won the $500 first (and only) prize with a mere 23 wrong answers. Like most entrants, seer Meyer predicted the presidential race would feature Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey in a losing role. Most of you also missed out on the Republican vice-presidential candidate, generally selecting Don Rumsfeld or Howard Baker over what's-his-name. Only seven of you suspected that the Dow Jones average would close over 1000 at year's end, although almost everyone assumed Ali would still be heavyweight champion. On the other hand, almost everyone believed Judith Exner's autobiography would outsell *The Final Days*! Not that we were so proficiently prophetic: Jimmy Carter's name did not appear even once in our '76 questionnaire.

Ah, well, better luck this time. Herewith the Fourth Annual Future Events Contest. On the answer sheet on page 67, circle your chosen numbers, fill in the blanks, and perhaps even win the adjusted-for-inflation prize of $524.

In 1977, Jimmy Carter will:

1. fly on a commercial airliner
2. appoint a successor to Attorney General Bell
3. meet with Richard Nixon
4. plant a magnolia tree on the South Lawn
5. meet with Bob Dylan
6. appoint a woman to the Supreme Court
7. send American troops to Africa
8. send American troops to Detroit
9. address the nation in a leisure suit
10. pardon Larry Flynt

Which of the following will be in jail on December 31, 1977?

11. Harry Reems
12. Patty Hearst
13. Marvin Mandel
14. Gregg Allman
15. Frank Rizzo
16. H.R. Haldeman
17. Chiang Ching
18. Sun Myung Moon
19. Frank Fitzsimmons
20. Richard Helms

Which of the following books will reach the number one position on the *New York Times* Best Seller list during 1977?

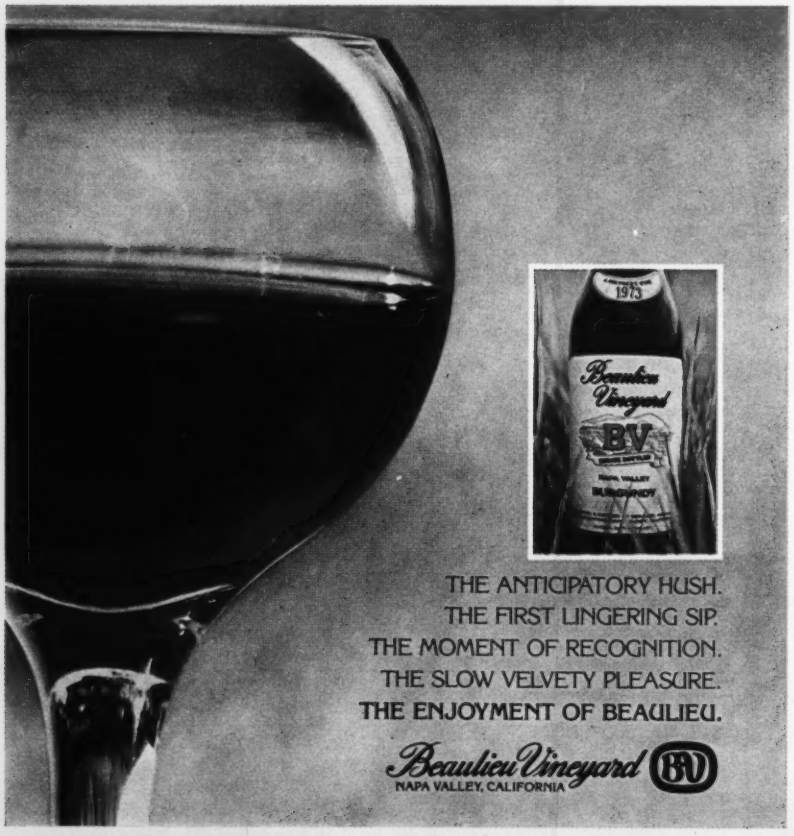
21. *Oliver's Story* by Erich Segal
22. *Illusions* by Richard Bach
23. *Full Disclosure* by William Safire
24. *Probate Made Easy* by Melvin Dummar
25. *Loose Change* by Sara Davidson
26. *Answered Prayers* by Truman Capote
27. *How To Save Your Own Life* by Erica Jong

E EVENTS CONTEST

28. *Talking to Myself* by Studs Terkel
29. *Son of Roots* by Alex Haley
30. *The Making of The President, 1976* by Theodore White
31. _____ will win the Best Picture Oscar in 1977.
a. *All The Presidents Men*
b. *Taxi Driver*
c. *Rocky*
d. *Network*
e. *Bound for Glory*
32. On December 31, 1977, the Plains Baptist Church will have _____ black members.
a. zero
b. 1-2
c. 3-4
d. 5-6
e. 7 or more
33. On December 31, 1977, the price of a gallon of regular gas at Billy Carter's gas station will be closest to _____.
a. 49¢
b. 59¢
c. 69¢
d. 79¢
e. 89¢
34. The number of executions in the United States during 1977 will be _____.
a. 1
b. 2-4
c. 5-7
d. 8-9
e. 10 or more
35. The total number of United States senators, representatives and governors indicted during 1977 will be _____.
a. zero
b. 1
c. 2-4
d. 5-9
e. 10 or more
Which of the following films will (according to *Variety*'s year-end figures) gross at least $20 million during 1977?
36. *The Heretic: Exorcist Part 2*
37. *Black Sunday*
38. *The Deep*
39. *Looking For Mr. Goodbar*
40. *Apocalypse Now*
41. *Billy Jack Goes to Washington*
42. *The Sentinel*
43. *New York, New York*
44. *Fun With Dick and Jane*
45. *A Bridge Too Far*
Which of the following will write a book about his/her/his-her memoirs in 1977?
46. Carl Butz
47. Janey Jiminez
48. Nicole Barrett
49. Ron Nessen
50. Daniel Schorr
51. Renee Richards
Which of the following will make a professional comeback in 1977?
52. Bobby Abdig

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE PHILLIPS

53. Claudine Longet
54. The Beatles
55. Dick Cavett
56. Joe Frazier
57. Bobby Fischer
58. Nancy Sinatra
59. *Hellzapoppin'*
60. *Life* magazine
61. The Gang of Four
62,63. _____ and _____ will play in Super Bowl XII. (Fill in team names.)
64,65,66. _____ will beat _____ in the 1977 World Series in _____ games. (Fill in team names and number of games.)
67. _____ will be the heavyweight champion of the world on December 31, 1977.
Which of the following couples will divorce in 1977?
68. George & Cornelia Wallace
69. Errol & Margaux Wetson
70. Wayne & Pat Hays
71. John & Elizabeth Warner
72. Richard & Susan Burton
73. Frank & Barbara Sinatra
74. Gregg & Cher Allman
75. John & Mo Dean
76. David & Julie Eisenhower
77. Sam & Meredith Bronfman
Which of the following will get married in 1977?
78. Prince Charles
79. Jerry Brown
80. Joe Namath
81. Clay Felker
82. Jimmy Connors
83. Linda Ronstadt
84. Lillian Carter
85. Barbra Streisand
86. Barbara Walters
87. Barbara Howar
88. In 1977, _____ Americans will win Nobel prizes.
89. *Time* and *Newsweek* will have the same cover-story subjects (during the same week) _____ times in 1977.
90. The number of tons of oil spilled in U.S. waters in 1977 (according to the U.S. Coast Guard) will be closest to _____.
a. 5 million
b. 10 million
c. 20 million
d. 40 million
e. 50 million
91. *Time*'s Person of the Year for 1977 will be _____.
Which of the following world leaders will be out of power on December 31, 1977?
92. Park Chung Hee
93. Fidel Castro
94. Hua Kuo-feng
95. Indira Gandhi
96. James Callahan
97. Idi Amin
98. Sidney Korshak
99. Ian Smith
100. Pope Paul VI
101. Leonid Brezhnev
Which of the following personalities will *not* be on the cover of *People* magazine during 1977?
102. Farrah Fawcett-Majors
103. Amy Carter
104. Jane Fonda
104. John Lennon
106. Robert Redford
107. Billy Carter
108. Erica Jong
109. Robert DeNiro
110. Jane Pauley
111. Mark Fidrych
Which of the following will place an album in *Billboard*'s weekly Top 10 during 1977?
112. Bruce Springsteen
113. The Kinks
114. Steely Dan
115. Graham Parker
116. Richard Nixon
117. Peter Lemongello
118. The Beach Boys
119. Emmylou Harris
Which of the following will no longer hold their current jobs on December 31, 1977?
120. U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young
121. Viking editor Jacqueline Onassis
122. Plains Baptist Church reverend Bruce Edwards
123. ABC anchorperson Barbara Walters
124. ABC anchorperson Harry Reasoner
125. NATO chief Alexander Haig
126. AFL-CIO president George Meany
During 1977, Henry Kissinger will: (Circle the numbers of those you think will occur.)
127. become a CBS executive
128. become a newspaper columnist
129. be on Nelson Rockefeller's payroll
130. be on trial
131. serve as U.S. secretary of state
During 1977, marijuana possession will be decriminalized in which of the following states?
132. New York
133. Hawaii
134. Wisconsin
135. Michigan
136. New Mexico
Which of the following events will occur in 1977?
137. A Liberian tanker will crash into another Liberian tanker
138. There will be an assassination attempt on President Carter
139. Rupert Murdoch will buy *New Times*
140. The unemployment rate will drop, at least briefly, below 7 percent
141. Development of the B-1 bomber will be unequivocally halted
142. An execution will be shown on television
143. A white version of *Porgy and Bess* will appear on Broadway
144. Someone will go on trial for the murder of Karen Silkwood
145. The Equal Rights Amendment will be ratified
146. Water rationing will be instituted in at least six states
147. Gerald Ford will concede the possibility of a conspiracy in the JFK assassination
148. An earthquake measuring at least 7.5 on the Richter scale will hit California
149. Mary Hartman will get into SM
150. *Vogue* magazine will get out of it
Tie-breaker: On December 31, 1977, the Dow Jones average will be _____.



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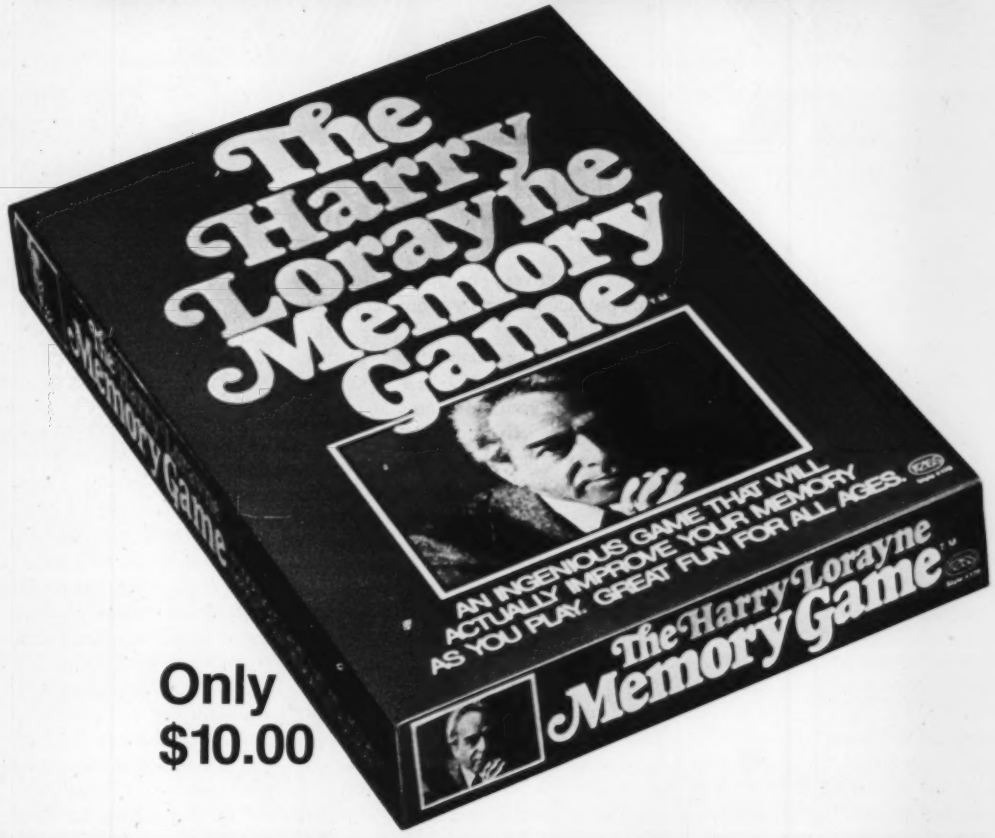
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WHAT WOULD DENTAL CHECKUPS BE WITHOUT X-RAYS? PROBABLY A LOT SAFER

BY CHRISTOPHER NORWOOD

X-RAYS
A TROUBLED PICTURE

X-rays give you cancer and doctors give you X-rays. The most recent government survey indicates that two-thirds of the population are X-rayed each year, with about 112 million patient visits for medical X-rays and another 68 million for dental X-rays. Indeed, the general population, through X-rays, is exposed to some 20,000 times the amount of radiation received from all production of nuclear energy.

This frenzy, moreover, continues in the face of a confusion about the appropriate use of X-rays so great that last year, within five pages of one issue, *Family Practice News*, a journal for general practitioners, described both X-rays and examination by hand as the preferred method of detecting breast cancer. On page 38, an article on a report to a meeting of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists began: "Careful clinical examination was more reliable than radiography in detecting breast cancer. . . ." "Mammography [breast radiography] is the best objective test currently available for breast cancer detection. . . ." commenced an article on page 43. Not surprisingly, two researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology concluded that about one-third of the X-rays taken in the United States serve no true medical purpose. They are, instead, snapped for the sole purpose of defensive medicine—in effect, just to have on hand in the event of a malpractice suit. Protecting doctors from lawsuits that haven't even been filed yet is, of course, a unique utilization of a device known to cause cancer. The entire history of radiation, however, is a unique chronicle of careless encounters.

The problem virtually began with the 1895 discovery of X-radiation. It seems physicians simply cannot concede that a machine that holds such remarkable benefits when used properly can also be misused. By 1897 it was known that high-level radiation can cause cancer. For another five decades, however, high-dosage "therapy" continued to be used to treat such relatively trivial matters as acne, warts, tonsillitis and ringworm. (The technique for ringworm of the scalp was to entirely burn off the patient's hair.) These practices, now largely discredited, have left behind thousands of persons who must pass the remainder of their lives being closely monitored for cancer. Perhaps the largest group of victims were the children whose tonsils were casually eradicated. One young woman whose parents, on the advice of the family doctor, consented to the removal of her tonsils, is especially angered by what she calls the "sheer faddism" of the operation: "I mean, that year, the big thing was to radiate tonsils. This year, you read some doctors saying not to have them out at all."

Despite all the grim studies on the aftermath of high-dosage radiation, doctors clung to the assumption that the lower doses used for diagnosis were entirely safe. That assumption was not shattered until 1956, when the first major study of low-level radiation, an investigation by the British researcher Alice Stewart into prenatal X-rays and childhood leukemia, finally appeared. Stewart suggested that between 5 percent and 10 percent of the childhood leukemia deaths in England were latent products of an X-ray exposure during pregnancy. Just one X-ray of the pelvis of a woman carrying a child seemed to double the chance that the acutely sensitive fetal cells would become cancerous.

In the aftermath of Stewart, continuing research has also indicated that X-rays of the female reproductive area pose a tenacious threat not merely to the unborn, but even to the unconceived. In contrast to the male body's constant production of new spermatazoa, the female body arrives intact for reproductive purposes, with its full complement of eggs already present at birth. Radiation of these eggs-in-waiting appears to increase both mongoloidism and leukemia among the children they become. For example, based on a comparison of the X-ray history of the mothers of 465 mongoloid children and 465 normal children, the British researcher Eva Alberman has proposed that those mothers who had been exposed to two rads of radiation before conceiving children had about double the chance of producing a severely retarded child. Two rads would be about the dosage cumulatively absorbed from three or four abdominal examinations.

A number of retrospective analyses of the fate of adults exposed to X-rays have now yielded estimates of the less potent, but real effect that low-level radiation has on mature cells. The National Academy of Sciences, for example, has suggested that for every 1 million persons exposed to one rad of radiation—a dosage usually present during such common procedures as examination of the lungs, breast and spine—between 50 and 165 excess deaths later result from cancer. Other expert observers have proposed death figures up to five times as high as those submitted by the National Academy.

In any case, the available figures

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have been serious enough to prompt organizations as diverse as the Nader-founded Health Research Group and the Federal Radiation Council to mount campaigns against excess radiation. In general, their theme is that X-rays should not be a routine or random part of medical practice. They should, instead, only be taken when a preexisting symptom or condition signals the need for further diagnostic probing—or, in the demure phrase of the FRC, when there is an "expectation of benefit resulting from such exposure." In a similiar vein, the American Dental Association has recommended that "radiographic examinations should not be made a part of every dental examination." There are, in short, myriad situations—the broken bone, the breach birth, the aching tooth and the suspected cancer—which justify any risk associated with radiation. But the habit of using X-rays to "just check up on things," to casually inspect molars and take an annual look at a lung, is not one of them.

Still, the use of radiation has continued to climb by about 4 percent each year, and the controversial breast cancer screening program now being conducted under the joint enterprise of the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute has provided a prominent example of the dubious fashion in which X-rays are marketed to the public. This program, which features the mass use of mammography to screen for breast cancer, was launched in 1972. That very year, the National Academy of Sciences had sounded a ringing alarm over "the convincing evidence" that some mass screening procedures, including chest X-rays, gastric X-rays, routine preemployment X-rays and "possibly mammography" did not justify the risks associated with their use. And, four years later, studies suggested that by including women under age 50 in its routine exams—women, in short, who are young enough that they might, after the ten-year latency period, suffer breast cancer—the project may have triggered more disease than was justified by the handful of lives saved directly through mammography. The American Cancer Society and the Cancer Institute, however, have continued to include hundreds of women under age 50 in such screening.

It has been proposed that only a cacophony of protest—from the consumer, the radiologist and regulator alike—can counter the inordinate use of radiation. Priscilla Laws, a physics professor and member of the federal Medical Radiation Advisory Committee who has written a consumer guide on X-rays, suggests that consumers "begin to question their physician about the need for each X-ray." One radiologist emphasizes the responsibility of doctors in charge of X-ray units to closely supervise the technicians—or, as they are now called, the "technologists"—who actually take the pictures. "Nagging isn't fun, of course," he concedes, "but you have to ride them every time to use the lowest possible dose." Then, there are the equipment manufacturers. The rabid controversy over breast cancer screening, for example, seems to have elicited, almost overnight, machinery improvements that reduce the level of radiation more than a hundredfold.

Perhaps even more discouraging than the growth in X-ray usage is the cavalier attitude that physicians display toward shielding patients. A simple lead shield placed over the reproductive area would, during most procedures, essentially eliminate damage to the waiting egg or the forming sperm. A prominent radiologist describes the use of a lead shield as "the most important thing you can do for a patient being X-rayed"; but a 1970 survey taken by the U.S. Bureau of Radiological Health disclosed that some 90 percent of X-rays in the United States are taken without such shielding.

There is no logical basis to explain carelessness of that order. X-rays may just be too lulling a cross between a child's camera and an adult toy—the big, glossy pictures, the radiologist warning, "Now lie completely still"—to be taken seriously. The last X-ray roundup that came to the controversial pass of the national breast cancer project was the old practice of mass screening for tuberculosis. The situation in Denver typified the final, bizarre years of this program. Between 1965 and 1970, the mobile chest X-ray unit operated by the county had only managed to locate 15 active cases of tuberculosis. Finding each case cost an average of $8,115, and in the process 100,000 people were exposed to amounts of radiation that may cause as many or more cases of cancer. Still, the decision to abandon the unit was not an easy one; the citizens had come to expect, at any price, annual reassurance of being free of a disease almost nonexistent in Denver. "We've created a fantastic need for X-rays in middle-class America," a city health officer explained to *Science* magazine. "We have to ease them through a gradual withdrawal." ●

Christopher Norwood, a New York-based journalist, is currently writing a book on environmental diseases.

Movies

Lit crit

By Richard Corliss

Once upon a time, back in the 1960s, educated people didn't go to see a foreign movie—they went to solve it. With the ascendancy in the early sixties of Federico Fellini, Alain Resnais and especially Ingmar Bergman, film had arrived as a legitimate art form. Scholars parsed Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* with a scrupulousness until then lavished only on *Ulysses* (the James Joyce book, not the Kirk Douglas movie—that would come later). The big questions on campus were: What in this film is real, and what is illusion? What did that symbol mean? What does it *all* mean? It was so novel to think about movies that most of us thought about them as if they *were* novels. And we spent so much energy cogitating that few of us noticed what an enjoyable con game Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad* was, or how much comedy there was in Fellini's *8½*, or that Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow-Up* was, at heart, a mod murder mystery.

Today, of course, few film critics are looking for easily analyzable profundities. The philistines, champions of Hollywood's vulgar vitality, have won. That's fine with me; I'm a philistine myself. But the atmosphere is hardly congenial for a film like **Providence**, which Resnais directed from David Mercer's script. *Providence* is concerned with nothing less than the creative process itself—the strategies artists use to develop their works, and the way they use people they know as their raw material. It's the stuff an artist's formalist dreams are made of; it's also the stuff of an undergraduate's thesis. *Providence* isn't so much a movie as it is a Pirandello shell game. But nobody cares any more where the reality pea is hidden—if it's there at all. Still, it can be fun to play the lit-crit game, if only for old times' sake, and especially with a film, like *Providence*, that you'd rather talk about than sit through.

Out of what crypt they crawl, I cannot tell,
But every night I see the rubbery things . . . .
Snatching me off on monstrous voyagings
To grey worlds hidden deep in nightmare's well.

—H.P. Lovecraft

Clive Langham (John Gielgud), the 78-year-old, much honored, slowly dying author, is having a nightmare—and composing a first draft of his last novel. The "grey world" of this particular nightmare is a nameless city in the throes of revolution. The "rubbery things"—the characters—are Clive's legitimate son Claud (Dirk Bogarde), his illegitimate son Kevin (David Warner), Claud's wife Sonia (Ellen Burstyn) and Clive's dead wife Molly (Elaine Stritch). Or, rather, they are melodramatic permutations of these characters as shaped by Clive's creative and pain-wracked imagination. Claud, a barrister, is seen as a desiccated sadist who blames his father for his mother's suicide. Sonia, driven to the brink of desperation by Claud's cruel jealousy, is ready to jump off—into the arms of Kevin, an amiable, otherworldly lad whom Claud had unsuccessfully prosecuted for the mercy-killing of an old woodsman who was turning into a hairy beast; later, Kevin will turn bestial, and Claud will kill him. Molly is associated in Clive's mind with Claud's mistress Helen (both women are played by the same actress), who is dying of cancer.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JURGEN VOLLMER

Burstyn and Gielgud: Dead air around the actors

You can tell, by the lack of believability some good actors bring to their roles, that these are all archetypal characters. And to keep their symbolic roles straight it's helpful to keep in mind the literal and literary meanings of their names. Claud = lame (as was Oedipus, with whom Claud shares a certain complex). Sonia = wisdom. Kevin (the love child) = comely birth. Helen (of Troy) and Molly (Bloom) are the names of literature's two most notable unfaithful wives. And hovering over all of them—pulling the strings on his marionettes, and occasionally being manipulated by them—is randy, rheumy Clive, the "one who clings" to life. Clive is indeed a tenacious old fart. He crows triumphantly over his few remaining signs of life: his bowel movements and erections, his flush and blood. In a fit of perverse generosity, he gives his erection to the "novel's" Kevin, who protests, "It isn't *mine*!" Clive is forever playing tricks on his creations: shifting scenes on them, taking dialogue out of the mouth of one character and giving it to another, commenting lewdly on the clichéd situations. "Well," he grumbles to himself, "if one's led a fatuous life one may as well have fatuous nightmares."

The nightmares—the novelist's scenario, which comprises most of *Providence*—are nothing if not fatuous. Epigrams are mouthed as if they were sips of a tawny port, by actors who car-

ry themselves like members of an amateur rep company performing a T.S. Eliot metaphysical drama—perhaps *The Elder Statesman's Family Reunion*. (Clive's scatological asides may remind us of Vladimir Nabokov's point that "T.S. Eliot" is an anagram of "toilets.") Or they might be acting in a Noel Coward play as rewritten by Harold Pinter: everyone has unimpeachable manners, and is enveloped by an imponderable menace. Or the scenario might be an illegitimate offspring of Tom Stoppard's screenplay for *The Romantic Englishwoman*: there's the same toying with time and space, and with a novelist who creates fiction out of his domestic life. Or it might be a Pidgin Englishing of Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries*, in which a 78-year-old professor's nightmares about his cold son and his dead wife reconcile him to dying. It might even be a script by David Mercer, like *Morgan!* (starring David Warner), which saw the artist as a kind of lunatic saint.

It isn't any of these, because the acting in *Providence* is deliberately "off"—even as the sets are deliberately fake. There's dead air around the actors, pressing their words back into the pages of Mercer's script. The language is Oxonian English, but it might as well be Esperanto; it doesn't reverberate. The film seems to be taking place on a ship bound for nowhere, with a ghostly crew, inside one of old Clive's whiskey bottles. "Style," Clive says, "is feeling in its most elegant and economic expression." But in the novel-within-the-film, "style" can only be found in the cut of Claud's dinner jacket; there's certainly no feeling that sparks, or even smolders, between the characters. If the ethereal body of the film is Clive's novel—and if Clive is a good novelist—then this must be a very rough first draft. Or not nearly rough enough.

This is the kind of movie where, you can bet, the title covers a multitude of symbols. My dictionary defines *providence* as: "1. care or preparation in advance" (Clive's exorcising of his family demons in preparation for his children's visit next day); "2. economy" (the terseness of Resnais' direction); "3. the care, guardianship, and control exercised by a deity" (Clive's novel); "4. God" (and a capricious, Old Testament God at that). But there's another Providence—"the capital of Rhode Island"—and this, believe it or not, is the key to the movie. For Providence was the lifelong home of H.P. Lovecraft, the fantasy writer of the early 20th century. And Lovecraft is, in a way, the main character of *Providence*.

Lovecraft was an American, but affected English spelling and diction. He was only 46 when he died (in 1937), but since childhood he had lived as an aged recluse. At the age of six he became fascinated by the Pan myth, and imagined that he was turning into that furry fertility god (even as Kevin and the old woodsman do). Confined by temperament to his family's huge, lonely old house, Lovecraft retreated into his own surreal world: the legendary New England of ghosts and witchcraft, and the more elaborate, nightmare region of Cthulhu—the world of his fiction. Only two things outside this imaginary universe gave him pleasure:

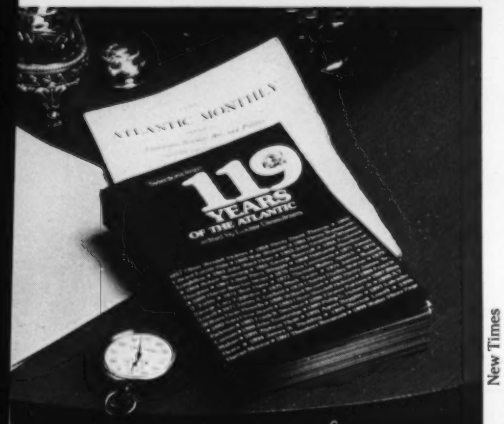
Sutherland: Obsessed by love

his wife, Sonia; and his hometown. "When showing Providence to visitors," his biographer, L. Sprague de Camp, notes, "Lovecraft would stop every now and then before some colonial relic or some sylvan scene and cry: 'Where but in Providence could you find. . . .'"

But where in *Providence* can you find H.P. Lovecraft? The film never mentions his name (not even in anagram form). His city makes an unbilled cameo appearance—in an early shot you can see "The spires of Providence ascend/Against the ancient skies"—but it isn't mentioned either. And Gielgud has testified that *he* was thinking of craggy old W.H. Auden and crabby old J.B. Priestley. Nonetheless, Lovecraft was the inspiration for Resnais' film as directly as old Clive's pleasant family was the source of his febrile fantasies. Resnais, like many French intellectuals, has long had a fondness for pulp fiction; most of Lovecraft's stories appeared in *Weird Tales*. And the director's preoccupation with shifting time frames of tenses (from present to past to conditional) is mirrored in Lovecraft's assertion that "Time, space, and natural law hold for me suggestions of intolerable bondage, and I can form no picture of emotional satisfaction which does not involve their defeat—especially the defeat of time. . . ." That's the task Resnais has set for himself in all his films, from *Hiroshima, Mon Amour* to *Stavisky*: to challenge our conception of real and reel time. It's an appealing challenge, and *Providence* is the embryo of a fascinating film—or the corpse.

So we can agree with Resnais that most of the acting is supposed to be stilted, and still ask why he chose as his heroine a naturalistic actress with a lower-middle-American grittiness; Ellen Burstyn just is not Gertrude Lawrence. We can savor the spectacle of Sir John Gielgud simulating death throes and talking dirty—a Mr. Magoo who thinks he's King Lear—and still ask whether Clive, the foxy grandpa of English Letters, would fashion such barren characters and situations out of his demons. We can respect the care with which Resnais has staged the proceedings, and still ask whether he has functioned here as a true collaborator or only as a meticulous stage manager. And we can enjoy searching for shards of H.P. Lovecraft among the ruins of *Providence* and still wonder why, if the filmmakers insisted on making an allegorical film about a literary light of Rhode Island, they couldn't have chosen S.J. Perelman.

Another old man creates a fiction out of his life and his dreams. Another renowned European director makes his first English-language film. But otherwise, what a difference between *Providence* and **Fellini's Casanova**—the difference between Resnais' arctic sunsets and Fellini's carnival at high noon. Even when the two men use a similar effect—such as a transparently false seascape—the Resnais suggests a literally dead sea, while Fellini's ersatz Adriatic puts you in mind of a giant, pulsating, Hefty-bag waterbed. Resnais is out to impress you; Fellini wants to astound. One man gently massages your cerebrum, the other plants a joy buzzer in your sweaty palm. Resnais is a humanist with the mind of a



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pedant, Fellini a moralist with the soul of a voyeur. Resnais shuffles his sequence of tenses like a cool-eyed baccarat dealer; Fellini is always conjuring up nostalgic images from his youth—bosomy, maternal seductresses and pale young virgins out of a painting.

This time around, I'll take Fellini. For the first time since the great *8½*, he's created a central character who's more than a caricature: Giovanni Jacopo Casanova de Seingalt, the Venetian man of lechers. A peripheral figure in the 18th-century courts, Casanova was a very modern sort of artist, for his masterpiece was the notoriety he carved out for himself—in his 12-volume *Memoirs*—as the great lover. As conceived by Fellini and incarnated by Donald Sutherland, though, Casanova is no brutal Don Juan; he's obsessed, not by the perfect orgasm, but by the purest love. He's the last of the romantic idealists, doomed to (at best) one-night stands with his immortal inamoratas. Alas, the world—the world of women—mistakes his tragic passion for mere resilient cocksmanship. His reputation precedes him like that of a retired gunfighter; and, more often than he'd like, he finds himself competing in a sexual decathlon with some quick-triggered young satyr, or doing push-ups in the corrugated arms of an aging duchess. Ah well, *noblesse oblige*. Giovanni Casanova is nothing if not a courtly lover.

Fellini will never be the complete filmmaker. He has too much the art director's sensibility, too great a love for the gargantuan and grotesque, too mortal a weakness for the kind of spectacular setpieces that can break a producer's heart and bank account. And he is famously reluctant to provide his actors with any psychological motivation for their characters' behavior; he prefers to stand just out of camera range, miming the gestures he wants his performers to make. So the craft and sympathy Sutherland brings to Casanova must be considered something of a heroic triumph. And when actor and director are working together—notably in a scene in which the great lover necromances a life-size doll-woman that could be his bionic twin—the movie is touched with a satanic magic. Warts and all, *Casanova* is Fellini's best film since *8½*, a welcome (if tentative) return to recognizable humanity after too many sideshow side trips. There's a lot to look at, and enjoy—but not all that much to write about. Some things passeth lit-crit understanding.

Music

Barbieri and Benson go gold with grace

By Robert Palmer

Gato Barbieri, the Argentinian-born jazz saxophonist and budding pop star, had taken off his familiar black hat, which meant that he was getting down to business. There he was, out beyond the glassed-in studio control room, playing a long solo along with a prerecorded band track. He would get to the end and then grimace, signal for the tape to be rewound and begin at the beginning. His producer, Herb Alpert, did not seem concerned, but the visitors in the studio wondered what Gato was up to. Each time he went through the song his melody lines and phrasing were practically identical. He seemed to be repeating the same solo over and over.

Alpert, who is best known for his frothy, forgettable, but very profitable Tijuana Brass albums, was trying his hand at a pop jazz production. The band tracks had been recorded with some of the best young rock-oriented jazzmen in New York City, and after Gato put down his part, a seasoned pop arranger would add an orchestral sweetening of strings and horns. The process is identical to that used in making pop records, but this was pop jazz, and Gato was supposed to be injecting a jazz element by improvising a solo. So where was the improvisation?

Finally, Barbieri unstrapped his horn and walked into the control room. "Okay, Herb," he said, "which sound do you like?" Of course! The melody and phrasing—the thing many jazz listeners listen for—were remaining the same, but the sound was changing. It would be hoarse and husky during one run-through, soft and satiny the next. The problem was this: which sound was best for the piece of music at hand? Gato and Herb discussed the pros and cons and then the saxophonist went back out into the studio and finished his part in a single take.

Barbieri: Which sound is best?

A few months later, Gato's album (*Caliente*, A&M) was in the stores and selling briskly, and guitarist George Benson, another jazzman who has turned to pop, was sprawled comfortably in the basement of his suburban home, playing guests a copy of *his* new album, *In Flight* (Warner Bros.). It was a lavishly produced affair, heavy on the strings, horns, swirling electronic keyboards and hustle rhythms, but the guitar playing had an unmistakable vitality, and so did the singing. Benson's previous Warner Bros. album, *Breezin'*, had sold almost 2 million copies, largely on the strength of the guitarist's single vocal feature, "This Masquerade." On *In Flight*, instead of one vocal, there are four. "What I'm trying to do on this album," Benson said, "is to make music that's universally appealing without sacrificing my musicianship."

This, in a nutshell, is the credo of the pop jazzman. To many hard-core jazz fans, musicians like Barbieri and Benson are prostituting their talents, and at its worst pop jazz is truly banal, a mishmash of funk clichés and formula arrangements with anonymous-

sounding studio musicians in featured roles. At its best, though, pop jazz is excellent pop, with top-notch jazz instrumentalists up front instead of singers. And since Barbieri and Benson are two of the most distinctive musicians working in the field, their records escape the formula straitjacket to a certain extent. Gato dominates his albums with his huge, grainy saxophone sound and vocalized shrieks, trademarks he has carried over into pop jazz from his days as an avant-gardist. Benson carefully picks his musicians and then records with them in the studio, instead of putting down his solos on top of prerecorded tracks. This gives his albums some of the bite and cumulative momentum of in-person performances.

Commercial albums like *Caliente* and *In Flight* should entice pop listeners to come to concerts by Barbieri and Benson, where they are likely to hear music that is considerably more energetic and aggressive than anything on the records. Gato is a firebrand on stage. He directs his band with jabbing and pummeling motions, screams through his saxophone and dances to the kinetic Latin American rhythms that are the bedrock of his compositions. At a recent performance, he walked over to a guitarist who was executing a pretty but uninvolved solo and jolted him into action by playing the saxophone into his ear.

Benson has enjoyed more material success than any other pop jazzman. There are his-and-hers Mercedes Benzes in the driveway of his home, and he is assembling a television and recording studio in the basement. He has everything to gain by playing it safe. But in concert performances, backed by the fashionably funky dance beat of his band, he tears into guitar solos with a rare combination of technical proficiency and emotional abandon. His singing has been heavily influenced by Stevie Wonder, but he is capable of raw, gospelish soul shouting too. His roots are in rhythm and blues, and while he considers himself a jazzman first, he is keenly aware of his value in the marketplace. In a period when the postwar baby boom is leveling off and record companies are aiming more of their products at older listeners, Benson is the perfect pop artist. He can entrance fans old enough to remember Nat King Cole's "Nature Boy," which he sings on *In Flight*, and still reach young dancers with his disco beat. "Staying musically up to par while using today's rhythms," he says, "that's what I'm up to."

Benson: The perfect pop artist

Before he joined Warner Bros., Benson was at CTI, where pop jazz records are turned out according to the dictates of the autocratic, hugely successful producer Creed Taylor. CTI albums by Grover Washington Jr. and Esther Phillips have gone gold and spawned hit singles with some regularity, but Benson found the CTI experience too much like working in a factory. 'I could have sold as many records as I'm selling now," he says, "if I'd had some input into the production. Musicians aren't crazy. They feel out audiences and get ideas, but unfortunately some producers don't get out in the street that much. My ideas would always get thrown out the window at CTI, and as a result I was always uncomfortable on my records. Now Tommy Li Puma, my producer at Warners, listens to what I want to do. The engineer asks me if I'm comfortable. It's a different situation entirely, because now if something feels natural we do it. And look at the difference in sales. Listen to the difference in the music."

There *is* a difference. Benson and Barbieri may not be in the forefront of creative jazz innovation, but they are two of the brightest lights in pop.

Records

By Jim Miller

★★★ **Disco Inferno,** *The Trammps* (Atlantic). With discotechnocracy threatening to spoil the form forever, it is a pleasure to report that the Trammps have released a new album with enough spunk and funk to prove that such humble virtues as "soul" still have a place in contemporary dance music. The Philadelphia group, formed in 1972 by session drummer Earl Young, an amateur vocalist with an amusing bass growl (first featured on "Zing Went the Strings of My Heart"), slowly amassed a cult following through a string of zany disco hits and pop flops. In June 1975, the band signed with Atlantic, cut an anemic album and immediately found themselves selling substantial numbers of records.

Disco Inferno allays any fears that their success, especially on the basis of such a formulaic offering, has compromised their wacky approach. The lyrics, often homey and homiletic, recall the Coasters, while their harmony singing is redolent of streetcorner doo-wop. The lead vocals, by contrast, often reach peaks of raw intensity rare for disco: just listen to Jimmy Ellis and Robert Upchurch on "Body Contact Contract" or "Don't Burn No Bridges."

Earl Young turns in an exemplary performance on drums (in the past, he has propelled such explosive dance discs as "Bad Luck" by Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes). As the fierce rhythm track on "Starvin'" attests, Young commands what may well be the hardest R&B band in the business.

★★★★ **Focal Point,** *McCoy Tyner* (Milestone); ★★★ **Montreux III,** Bill Evans (Fantasy); ★★★ **My Spanish Heart,** *Chick Corea* (Polydor). Three of our most able contemporary pianists, in three superior recordings. Tyner's effort captures his working band, abetted by saxophonist Gary Bartz; by summoning a supple sense of turbulence, they press Tyner to the kind of whirling-dervish virtuosity he has staked his reputation on. By contrast, Evans' charms remain discreet and elusive, although his album of duets with bassist Eddie Gomez offers his playing at its most pleasurably ruminative. Corea, in the meantime, has retreated momentarily from amplified clichés to evoke his Latin roots (he cut his teeth with Mongo Santamaria and Willie Bobo in the early sixties); his two-record set contains mood music of a high order indeed, as Corea gracefully alternates between acoustic, electric and synthesized keyboards, for his most likable outing in several years.

Books

Life and death sentences

By Geoffrey Wolff

Mortal Lessons: Notes on the Art of Surgery *by Richard Selzer.* Simon and Schuster (219 pp., $8.95).

The Body Is The Hero *by Ronald J. Glasser.* Random House (248 pp., $8.95).

Richard Selzer essays to identify himself: "I am a surgeon. I do not shrink from the particularities of sick flesh. Escaping blood, all the outpourings of disease—phlegm, pus, vomitus, even those occult meaty tumors that terrify—I see as blood, disease, phlegm, and so on. I touch them to destroy them. But I do not make symbols of them."

If symbols are the kinsmen of analogies, of conceits, then Selzer does not know himself, for his entire purpose in *Mortal Lessons* is to see through and beyond a tangle of wires, pumps, tubes, sacks, struts, joints and juices into life. In his own teasing, inviting locution he would find "the exact location of the soul." He would dignify the bowels and translate into figures of speech the magical performance of the liver. Such is Selzer's reverence for life that this surgeon at the Yale School of Medicine, this master technician, speaks explicitly of his calling as priestly, and from his meanest act as a surgeon he squeezes the pips of ritual.

Of course he fashions from his encounters symbols, but they are of a vital, a consequential, nature. Here he is a witness to the abortion of a fetus in its twenty-fourth week. The surgeon inserts a long needle into the abdomen of a Jamaican who has been locally anesthetized. She feels no pain, manages a smile. The needle stands from her belly, prepared to receive prostaglandin, which will cause the mother to expel her fetus. Selzer looks on, and then he sees something, sees it again, a small movement, "unexpected, utterly unexpected, like a disturbance in the earth, a tumultuous jarring. . . . And now I see that it is the hub of the needle in the woman's belly that has jerked. First to one side. Then to the other side. Once more it wobbles, is *tugged*, like a fishing line nibbled by a sunfish." Selzer is amazed, engaged, perhaps horrified. He knows what he sees, its nature. He knows the fetus feels no pain, is without motivation. Yet: "It is the fetus struggling against the needle." He knows that he has witnessed a reflex, merely. Yet he points to the jerking needle: "It is a reflex, says the doctor."

From such deep and resonant mysteries Selzer builds his essays, more properly legends in miniature, creation myths and tales of epic battle, surveys of territory beyond the frontier we patients rarely are privileged to cross, rarely wish to cross. After the knife cuts, Selzer leads his party into "terra incognita." He knifes into the abdomen, looks: "Such a primitive place. One expects to find drawings of buffalo on the walls." His description of gall and kidney stones, those black princes of pain whose victims are gathered by the acuity of their awful experience into a fraternity, is an extraordinary exploitation of language and metaphor, baroque, fanciful, never opaque, illuminating, theatrical, a full story. His material is the stuff of poor Tom on the heath, the unclothed, buffeted, buffeting riddle.

Selzer had a patient with diabetes, and acute mortification, gangrene. This young lady suffered exquisitely as pieces of her foot ulcerated, died, chipped off, stank. She and Selzer shared her piecemeal sloughing away till neither could endure more of it, and both elected to remove her leg. At the moment of the amputation Selzer bared her leg to find drawn, upside down, on her kneecap, a crude face with a mouth turned up; under this the girl had printed "SMILE, DOCTOR. Minutes later I listen to the sound of the saw, until a little crack at the end tells me it is done."

He's inside something alive, more or less your size, your shape, of your consequence; he's talking, putting it all in the record: "The stomach is okay. Greater curvature clean. No sign of ulcer. Pylorus, duodenum fine. Now comes the gallbladder. No stones. Right kidney, left, all right." (A routine charting, what they call an exploratory, his voice must be droning.) "Liver . . . uh-oh. . . . Three big hard ones in the left lobe, one on the right. Metastatic deposits. Bad, bad. Where's the primary? Got to be coming from somewhere."

Selzer is so important a mender, and so odd a writer, because of precisely this faith, that bad luck has "to be coming from somewhere." Not from planetary influence or the sins of childhood, but from some place within the reach of language. Now to reach so far, language must stretch, lean, try acrobatic leaps. And sometimes, oftimes, Selzer's language strains, loses

Surgeons must be careful: An illustration from Selzer's *Mortal Lessons*

grace and balance, pratfalls. In one of the essays tacked to the end of this study of surgery and the objects upon which the surgeon practices, Selzer discusses his childhood in Troy, N.Y., where he was the son of a general practitioner. He writes of a moment of crisis when, under pressure, "I had slipped into the kind of superfluousness of expression that was to plague and embarrass me all the days of my life."

Among doctors who have distinguished themselves as writers Selzer is of the tribe of Rabelais rather than Chekhov. Excess and eccentricity are his bold signatures and his conspicuous vices. He treasures antique locutions, "lo," "nay," "wouldst," "ye." He writes "thrice times thrice," and would not dream of "nine." He has an inexplicable affection for Miltonic inversions and for an arsy-turvy vis-à-vis between nouns and their modifiers. Thus: "with hands familiar" and "toys fantastic" and "act most audacious," "endless is [Selzer's] eagerness" to say it as it is not said, but was once spake upon a very faraway time. Thus the whippoorwill is heard singing from "out the night window" and the belly, devouring itself, "is become Samson." Nor is Selzer an enemy of puns, or of the jangle of ossified slang: "Even so recent a personality as Julius Caesar learned of the bad vibes of the Ides of March from an old liver lover. . . ."

Seven years ago a long book by a physiologist from the University of Cincinnati, Gustav Eckstein, appeared. The author was 80 years old when *The Body Has a Head* (the body, he believed, exists entirely for the rest, the head) was published, and it was in every sense a life's work, a self-fabricated monument. The book was an inclusive study of the body's manners and purposes, and it had reach and appetite and wit and humanity and a soul. It sank, like a cast-off truck dumped in a still pond, from the world's consciousness. And disappeared, sad monument, because of the occluded character of its prose, or so I believe. Like Selzer, Eckstein rummaged up antique structures and usages, labored to write like a Writer. He knew what he was doing, couldn't help himself: "A literary tone," he wrote, "fell of itself over the writing, was allowed to, because the wonder of the body, met at every turning, inspires moods of wonder, of philosophy, of far distances."

I sympathize: the case is not unique—wonder and awe, the miraculous and the awful, are everywhere—but I sympathize. And to be fair to Selzer, his purple patches are so easy to pick on because he is so splendid a writer when he is working to form, like a surgeon, at once relaxed and attentive, cutting around malignancies to excise them. He describes a patient who "dies . . . of *complication*." Paragraphs likewise may die . . . of *complication*.

Ronald J. Glasser, an instructor of pediatrics at the University of Minnesota, a physician, and the author of two fine books, *365 Days* and *Ward 402*, limits his risks, controls his effects. *The Body Is the Hero* is ostensibly about immunology and the body's immune systems, but it is also a polemic against dogma and ignorance, against heedlessness and complacency. Glasser rises to the ethers to scout for cosmic conceits when he describes the

The body as hero: Glasser writes of immunology, reason and miracles

making of the earth, but when in cosmos write as the cosmics do, I guess. Otherwise he works to bring straight and hard news and history about most complicated enigmas.

His principal subject is the relentless violence committed by the body's immune system against foreign cells and bacteria and viruses. "It is the body that is the hero" on this battlefield, "not science, not antibiotics . . . not machines or new devices." Indeed, science and medicine as institutions in which reside conventional wisdoms are regarded by Glasser as the enemies of progress and health, and this book, with tact and restraint and justice, pits against these institutions such lonely and derided figures as Pasteur and Semmelweis, the latter of whom may be thanked for putting paid to puerperal fever. Before Semmelweis noticed that women died in childbirth (none survived during an entire year in Lombardy) after contact in lying-in hospitals with doctors who did not wash their hands before delivering babies, the disease was regarded as an instrument of fate. He suggested that doctors wash their hands and instruments: "How do you know it was the hand-washing?" he was asked. "Maybe it was something else." Such stubborn and sorry stupidities abound here, and threaten to rise from their place as narrative subtext to overwhelm the more subtle instruction that Glasser wishes to make.

Like Selzer, he is a celebrant, a man put in awe of the microscopic. He persuades a reader to bend before certain mysteries of salvation and destruction, and then to fight against them, but never to personalize them. The immune system fights strep throat, but it also rejects a transplanted kidney. Sometimes "it leaps too soon; sometimes it misreads the signs and launches itself at our own cells. . . ." The process is bleak: the system is indifferent to our wishes, and "works entirely at the level of physics and chemistry."

It is from immunology that Glasser anticipates a cancer cure, and by immunology that medicine's most striking advances have been attained. Yellow fever, rabies, smallpox, polio, measles: "preventive medicine with the eloquent quietness of its achievements is taken for granted. . . ." and now more than 70 percent of all America's children aged one to four are not adequately immunized against killer diseases. Half of them can contract polio. So Glasser wages a polemic against indifference, as he does against smoking and Red Dye No. 2 and the depletion of the ozone by supersonic aircraft. He is a reasonable man, wishes the world's patients to be reasonable.

But in the end he returns to the mystery, what he, like Selzer and Eckstein, comfortably call *miracles*. He believes that the mind can "cure" the body, and he doesn't know, anymore than Selzer knows, why Joe Riker, who had a cancerous hole in the top of his head "as big as his mouth," was cured. Selzer wanted to put his knife to that ulcer, so big "you could have dropped a plum in it." But Joe Riker wouldn't let him, and cured himself, washed himself with holy water from Lourdes. It was a trick of faith, self-deception if you will, a trick played on the immune system, and on mortality.

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Final Tribute

California's muckraker-in-chief/By Daniel J. Blackburn

Robert Henry Simpson didn't look much like a criminal, despite his arrest record which (printed even in the smallest type) would have extended far beyond the reach of his scrawny, outstretched arms.

California's self-appointed "muckraker-in-chief" made a lifestyle out of calling to public attention the personal shortcomings of politicians. Former governor Ronald Reagan was "a scummy bastard, swindler and treacherous fraud." In turn, Reagan termed Simpson "one of a kind, colorful and irrepressible to the end." Gov. Edmund G. Brown Sr., father of Jerry the Current, was "a vicious viper," a slur that caused Brown Sr. to call Simpson "a gentle soul, a perfect example of free speech in America."

Simpson's arrests numbered 318, give or take a few, an awesome feat made even more spectacular in view of his late start: he waited until he was 85 to run afoul of the law. After that, the feisty old gentleman averaged a bust every ten days or so until the day he died, January 20, at the age of 96. A booking officer at Sacramento city jail, where Simpson was a frequent visitor, said the arrest total might be a record "if we didn't count the daily drunks." On Simpson's last birthday, the cops hosted a party for him. He was a favorite of secretaries and stenographers at the capital, and of the state police, who patrol the building and its grounds.

A classic bulldog fighter, Simpson was the kind that got his teeth into an adversary and then stubbornly refused to let go. Reagan's tolerant analysis of his nemesis, made the day after Simpson's death, is laced with irony, for it was none other than Reagan who first supported, and then signed into law, the "Simpson Act" of 1969. The statute was aimed at removing the chief muckraker from the marbled halls of the capital where he prowled daily, his chrome-plated walker bedecked with placards proclaiming the faults of "the bastard lawmakers." He had a beef, this gnarled near-centurian, and he was forced to plead his case in the only way that had been left to him—blatant political action.

It all started 12 years ago, when Simpson, then a spry 85, found himself lodged in a state hospital. On his first day of confinement, he asked for, and received, a typewriter. "It was the biggest mistake of their lives," he said later of his keepers. He began to write letters, one after another, to everyone he could think of, telling them of his plight. Seven months later, he was given a sanity hearing and was released. He headed straight for Sacramento, took a small room in a run-down hotel near the great stone edifice that was to become his regular beat, and began painting signs.

"The mental health laws make it easy to get rid of the eccentric, the elderly and the unwanted," he said often. "No one listens." He castigated Brown Sr. for "making me a political prisoner." He chided Reagan for refusing to investigate his allegations, and Brown Jr. for not censuring his father's actions. He was a champion of equal rights for women. He argued for the impeachment of judges and for the jailing of Richard Nixon.

THE SACRAMENTO BEE

UPI

Simpson in action: "I keep on living, I keep on complaining"

Every morning he would roll slowly, with just a little pain from his bad back, from that tiny iron bed in that tiny, cluttered hotel room, wrestle himself onto the walker and begin his odyssey anew. He would smile at passers-by, encouraging the more timid of them to read every word of his signs.

"Don't be offended," he would say. "We have to tell it straight or no one listens."

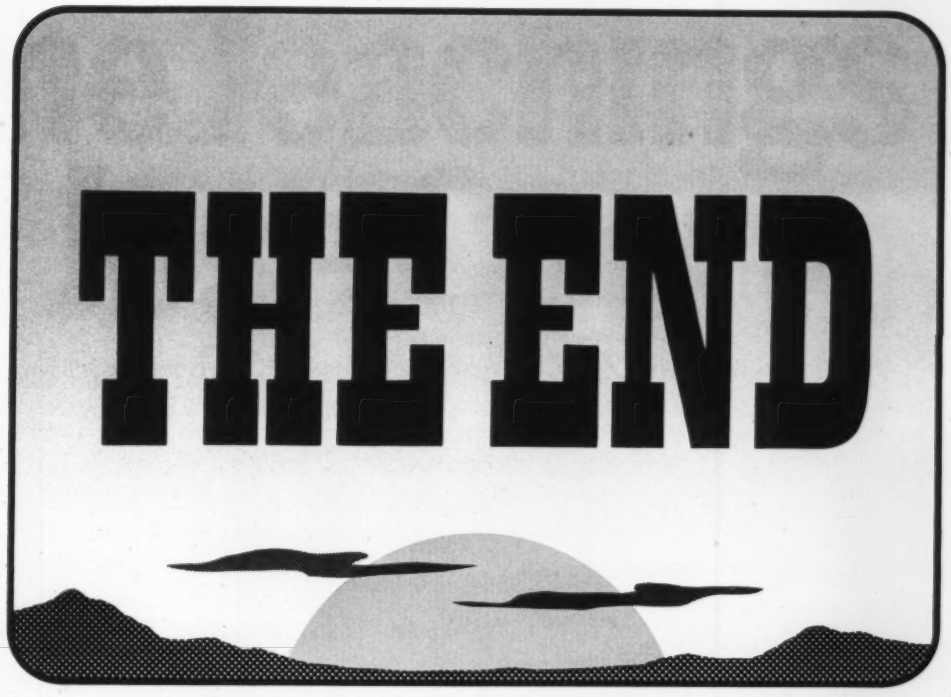
But often they were offended. One woman, whose years were as numerous as his, tottered up to him on one occasion and shrilled, "Go home, old man, go home where you belong! You're a disgrace!"

He grinned after her, and then his face became somber. "*You're* the disgrace," he said softly at her retreating back. "You've given up already."

Even his own children found cause for exasperation. One son, called as a character witness at one of Simpson's few trials, told the judge, "We can't do a thing with him. He's got this old Victorian thing about honor and commitment." For his part, Simpson "didn't give a damn" what his children thought of him. "I keep on living, I keep on complaining about these bastards in government."

Shortly after his election, Jerry Brown repealed the Simpson Act and infuriated its namesake: "I loved that law. It showed just how far those bastard legislators would go against one old man."

With the curious aplomb of the aged, Simpson wrote his final words for all to remember: "If there has to be a eulogy, nine words will do. Just say: There goes a nuisance that only death could abate." ●



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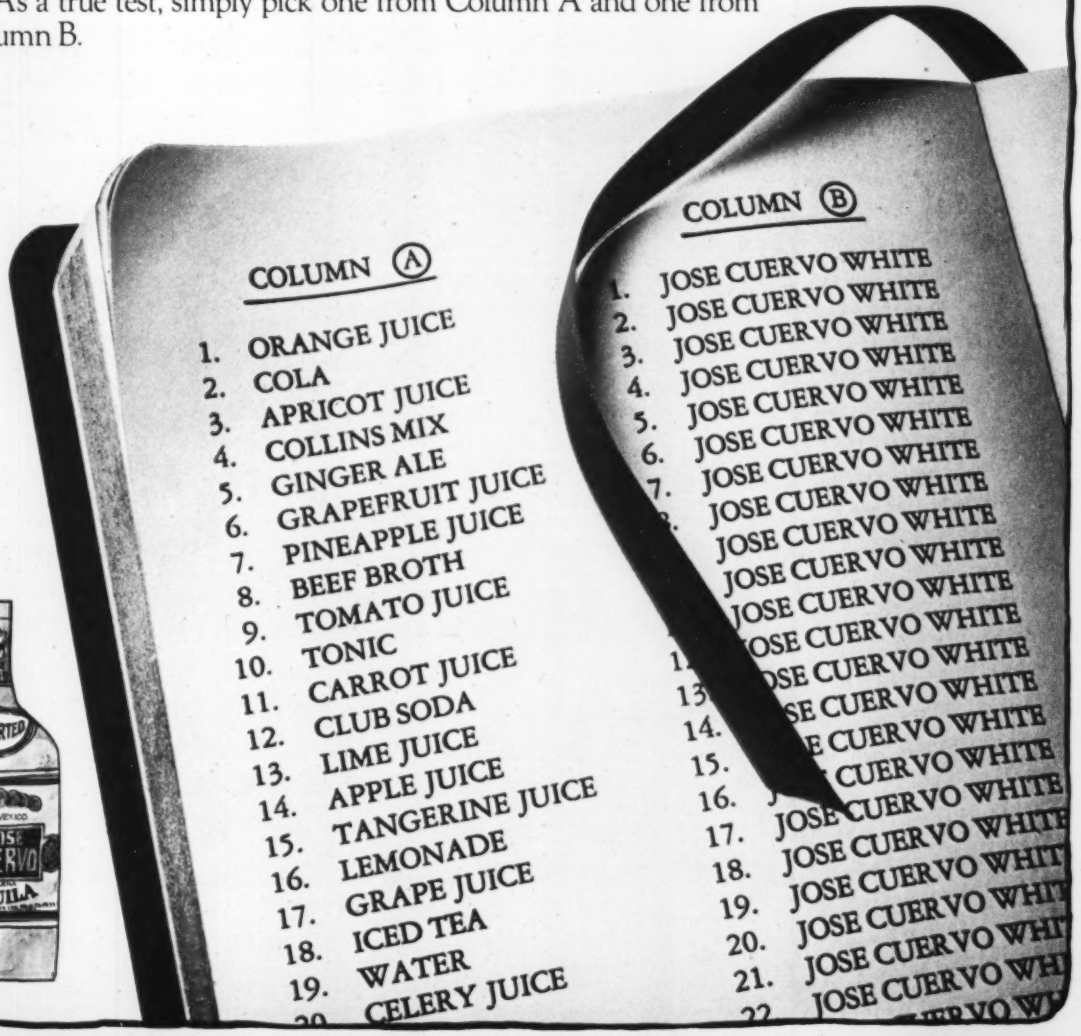

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